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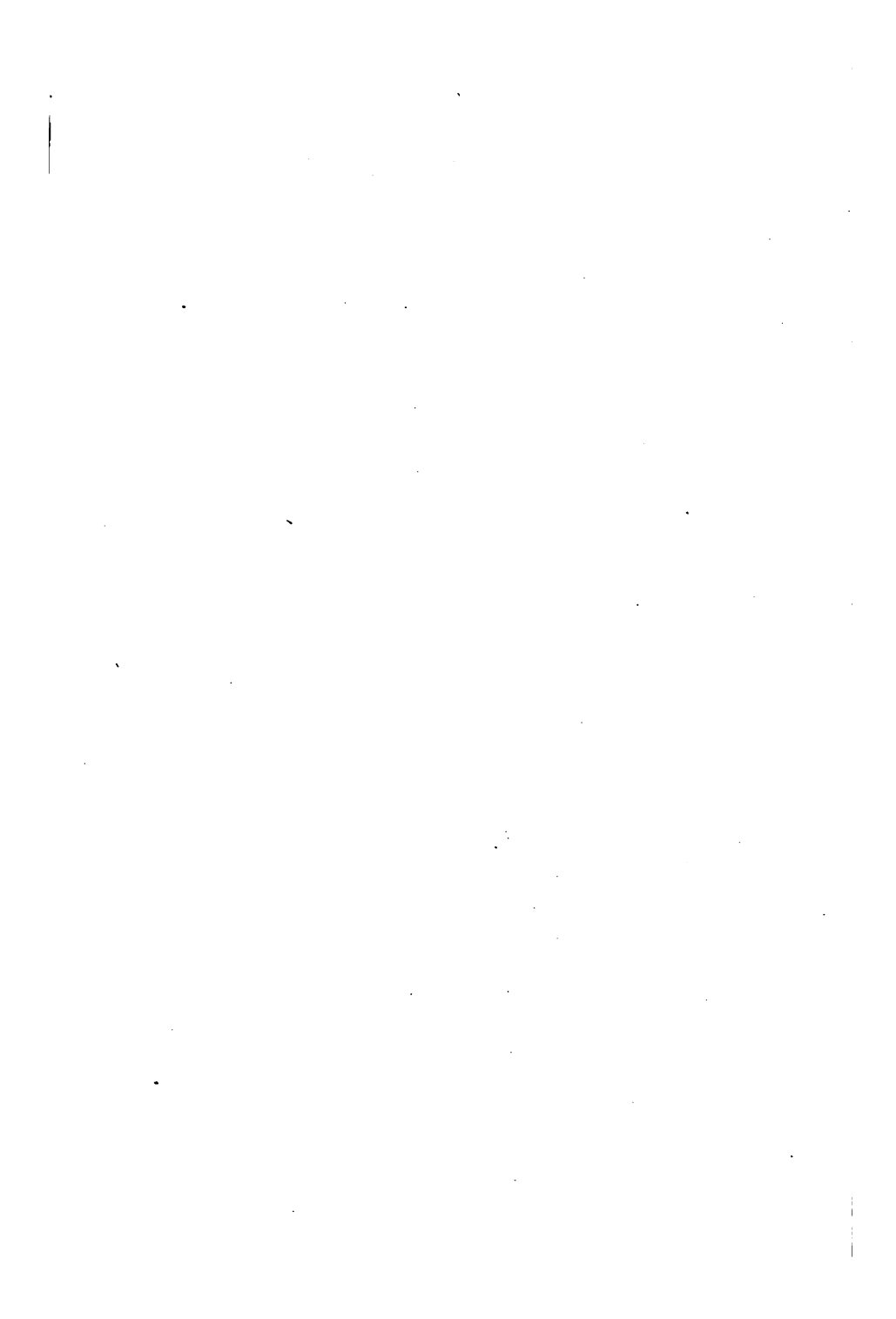
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PHILIP DARRELL.

VOL. I.



# PHILIP DARRELL.

*A Romance of English Home Life.*

BY

ALBERT E. ROWCROFT.

Ged comes with leaden feet, but strikes with iron hands.

OLD PROVERB.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

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## CONTENTS OF VOL. I.



### CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
Introduces the Hero, and tells something of his birth and parentage ... ..	1—7

### CHAPTER II.

Takes a glance at a modern Sangrado, who, un- like his ridiculed prototype, does not advo- cate the 'Cupping and Warm Water' Theory ... ..	8—14
---	------

### CHAPTER III.

Brings before the Reader's favourable notice a worthy representative family of the Great Middle Class ... ..	15—24
--	-------

### CHAPTER IV.

The Hero takes a trip to Maidstone, enjoys a Musical Evening, and has a shake hands with the Heroine ... ..	25—50
---	-------

## CHAPTER V.

A further glance at Doctor Renhard and Vaughan, and a little detail concerning their method of answering unwelcome messages	...	...	...	...	PAGE 51—61
--	-----	-----	-----	-----	---------------

## CHAPTER VI.

Tom Darrell	...	...	...	...	62—79
-------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-------

## CHAPTER VII.

Allen Heyson—Adèle—Maidstone friends	80—92
--------------------------------------	-------

## CHAPTER VIII.

Philip and Tom pay a visit to Maidstone to- gether—Philip hurt by Adèle's fickleness— Antagonistic affinity	...	...	...	93—106
---	-----	-----	-----	--------

## CHAPTER IX.

Philip's anger—A sudden light breaks in upon Adèle's mind—The 'Sonate Pathétique'— A sudden change—Sweet caresses—Poor Allen	...	...	...	...	107—121
---	-----	-----	-----	-----	---------

## CHAPTER X.

A very practical chapter, detailing a mother's anxious efforts for her daughter's welfare ;
--

---

	PAGE
and showing how Philip visited Mme De Brenne at her own invitation, and what happened during his visit ...	122—154

### CHAPTER XI.

Philip is reminded by letter that he has been invited to dine with Mr John Allerton—Tom and he go together—Some details of the dinner and the pleasant gaucheries of Messrs Allerton <i>filz</i> , of the distinguished guests, and of the prominent part Philip played in the entertainment ...	155—175
--	---------

### CHAPTER XII.

The amusements and the companions of Mr Thomas Darrell—an intrigue with a girl who is <i>only</i> a Labourer's Daughter ...	176—193
---	---------

### CHAPTER XIII.

Katie Wright's father—A product of our boasted civilization—His suspicions—His discovery of the second ear-ring—Kate leads him past the right place—John Wright sets himself to watch ...	194—202
---	---------

### CHAPTER XIV.

Yielding to temptation—A sudden interruption—A horrible blow—John Wright in the	
---	--

	PAGE
fir wood—The agony of a day—John Wright seeks London—He is accused of the murder of his daughter ...	203—219

## CHAPTER XV.

Meets Katie Wright in London—‘Help! me for the love of God’—Mrs Seigert sends for the Doctor—Philip listens to Katie’s delirious ravings—Who is Mr Tom?—A problem worth the solving—Philip questions Katie and makes a discovery—The helping hand ...	220—243
---	---------

## CHAPTER XVI.

Katie’s convalescence—Judgment is passed upon Mr Seigert and his wife—Minnie comes to see Kate—Philip makes the ‘premier pas qui coûte’—A haggard face watches the window where Katie sits—The man meets Tom and Philip, and follows them—Another link of the chain is forged ...	244—268
---	---------

# PHILIP DARRELL.

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## CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCES THE HERO, AND TELLS SOMETHING OF HIS  
BIRTH AND PARENTAGE.

A BRAVE ship tossing and tacking against adverse winds ; its captain keeping an anxious watch on the wind-swept deck.

Below, a wife by her husband's bedside—a bed that has been made between the two cabins of the state-cabin, for Charles Darrell was a man of great height, and the narrow berth became unbearable when deadly sickness struck him down.

The last flickering gleams of a noble life were fading. On one side his wife knelt and held his hand clasped in hers. On the other stood a child, brown-haired, brown-eyed, with

a wonderful expression in the eyes, and a look of power in the harsh rugged face, though the boy only mustered twelve summers and winters.

His father fixed his eyes upon his eldest son, and said these words :—

‘ Philip, you are the eldest and the truest of my boys. Remember that through your earthly life your highest aim should be—Simply to do your Duty. Do that well, and you will please God.’

The brave voice grew weak suddenly. Mrs Darrell sent for her other children—a boy, Tom, beautifully handsome, and a girl. They knelt down by their father’s bedside.

‘ Do you know them, dear ? ’ said the wife.

‘ Yes ! ’ replied the dying man ; ‘ this is Tom, that is Julia, and there is my Philip.’

His eyes closed gently and his hand gripped his wife’s with a vice-like clasp. The strong heart had ceased to beat.

\* \* \* \*

The ship was thirteen hundred miles from land. So the body of one of the truest

gentlemen that ever lived was sewn up in a canvas shroud, with a cannon-ball tied to the feet, and the third day after his death Charles Darrell's corpse was buried in the ocean.

Philip stood by, holding Tom and Julia by the hand, and the poor boy kept down his bitter sobs, lest his mother should note them, and so feel her own grief intensified by the sorrow of her children. Tom and Julia were silent from wonder and fear! And as the concluding words of the Burial Service committed the body to the deep, the sailors gently raised the plank, and it fell with a splash into the sea!

Poor Mrs Darrell fainted, and the captain took her in his arms and carried her to her berth. Then, as his mother could no longer see him, Philip sobbed aloud. Frightened at his vehement weeping, Tom and Julia cried too. They only dimly comprehended what their loss was.

\* \* \* \*

Then came long years of struggle and hardship. I say hardship, for during the lifetime of Charles Darrell his house had been a

luxurious home, governed with rare taste and tact by his wife ; there were few homes in England that could match it for splendid hospitality, polished manners, and true gentlemanliness.

But when Mrs Darrell came to England, her husband's affairs were in great disorder. He was returning on that account himself. His death upset everything ; and it was only by the exercise of untiring perseverance, and the exhibition of a foresight and a capacity for business and work which quite astonished her friends, that Mrs Darrell was able to rescue a pittance of about a hundred and twenty pounds a year from the wreck of her husband's fortunes.

But every one helped her, because she bravely set about helping herself. Yet, at one time, whilst she was working to give her children the education their birth demanded, she hid herself from her friends ; for during that period she suffered horribly, as the companion to a miserly lady. Humiliation, insult, and insufficient food ; the feeling of shame that she sometimes could not keep down.

She bore them all, poor, brave, lion-hearted mother, for the sake of her children.

Now, the struggle was ended, Julia was dead, Philip and Tom were both thoroughly well educated, and had set about fighting the battle of life for themselves. Tom was as handsome as a man as he had been beautiful as a child. At present our story does not touch him. Let us see what Philip is doing.

\* \* \* \* \*

‘Mr Darrell,’ said Dr Renhard, as he gathered up his books, his gloves, and his hat, ‘I shall be back from my first round about four o’clock.’

‘Very well, Doctor!’ replied a voice—the owner of that voice standing by a counter, engaged in rolling out pills, with a vigour and a fierceness that would seem astounding and unnecessary to the uninitiated in the noble art of Dispensing and Surgery.

The person thus unromantically presented to the reader was some five feet eight inches in height, broad and strong-limbed. He was not handsome—in fact, Philip Darrell as man was just what one might have expected from

his childhood. He had brown hair and eyes, and brown whiskers and moustache; but when you looked at his face, full-turned to the light, something in it attracted you—something you could not have explained, or even, perhaps, understood, radiated from that countenance—only the brave eyes, under the broad high forehead, could have given that look to so awkwardly fashioned a face, for it was too long and too broad, the chin was square and set, the lips irregular, and the mouth seemed to have grown into a bump on one side. Altogether the face was a singular one, only redeemed by the look of power and determination given by the chin and the lofty forehead, and the infinite tenderness of the eyes. And Philip was such an awkward fellow: he looked rough and uncouth, and had a way of *thrusting* himself into a room instead of walking in as others walked; and his laughter would sound half through the house. Philip only resembled his father in the high feeling of honour and *gentilhomme* that showed itself in every action of his life. His father had been eminently polished, and the associ-

ate of the first men in the land. Now, Philip was a surgeon's assistant, and did his work well, and obeyed his father's wish, and did his duty.

\* \* \* \* \*

At four o'clock Dr Renhard came in, gave his paper of prescriptions to Philip to dispense, and Philip was soon plunged *in medias res*. Presently he rang a bell, called down the stairs, 'Medicine, John.' The boy came up, the physic was despatched, and quiet once more reigned in the surgery.

A quiet broken, however, by the sound of Dr Renhard's voice, as he sat on the stool making out his second round.

As the Doctor was a man *sui generis*, and the surgery arrangements and customs somewhat singular, we defer the description of both to another chapter.

## CHAPTER II.

TAKES A GLANCE AT A MODERN SANGRADO, WHO, UNLIKE HIS RIDICULED PROTOTYPE, DOES NOT ADVOCATE THE 'CUPPING AND WARM WATER' THEORY.

AS Doctor Joshua Renhard sat on the old music-stool, that did duty in the surgery as no longer fit for the dining-room, he reminded one forcibly of that skit in one of Hood's Annuals, 'Captain Back.' The Doctor seemed all 'back' as he sedately sat, droning out the names of the patients he had to see.

He was short and broad, and as his coat-tails hung down behind the stool, they gave a look of immense length and squareness to his back—his legs being partly hidden, added to the illusion. The Doctor's hair was leaving his head, and having nearly managed to get completely away, required very careful brushing to cover a moderate portion of his cranium. As he held his pen one could see how long his hand was, decorated on each

finger, between the knuckles and first joint, by little tufts of dark hairs. The nails were scrupulously clean, in fact the Doctor was all cleanliness and immense shirt front. His big face was whitish and shining with cleanliness. His short, close-cut whiskers seemed to have whitened even more than whiskers usually do, from the continuous brushing and combing they underwent at the Doctor's hands. They stuck out on each cheek like the bristles of a hair-brush, and looked somewhat similar to them.

Philip just stooped to open a cupboard door, and as the door gave a squeak and a rattle, the Doctor held up his hand to enjoin silence, and then went on—thus—

‘Jenkins, one — Jenkins, one — Mallow, two—Mallow, two—Hobson, three—Whitworth—No! Jacobs, four—Jacobs, four—Whitworth, five. What is Mrs Whitworth taking now, Mr Darrell?’

‘Oh, she’s taking a chlorate of Potash mixture with chloric Ether, and burnt sugar, sir,’ replied Darrell.

‘Well, leave out the BURNT SUGAR, Mr

Darrell, please ; I promised her to make *some change.*'

'Very well, sir.'

'Let me see, now ; where was I ? Oh ! Whitworth, five—Jennings, six—Jennings, six—and then on to Worlands, at Maida-hill, seven, and home—about seven o'clock. Keep all the patients who call until I come in, if they will wait.'

'I will, Doctor,' said Philip.

With that the Doctor turned down the wristbands of his superfine broadcloth coat, carefully buttoned them, caught up his memorandum book, hat and gloves, and stalked out of the surgery, saying as he went, 'I shall have a cup of tea with Mrs Renhard, and then go on my second round. Let me know when the carriage is announced.'

Philip made suitable answer, and the Doctor, softly closing the door, left him to his ruminations. Many people disliked Doctor Renhard because he always presented to the world a bland and smiling exterior. Judging only from what they could see they concluded that he must be a hypocrite, as no one can

always preserve such equanimity of demeanour, or, he must 'put on' this constant look of benevolence for a distinct purpose. Now this last surmise was correct.

Doctor Renhard found that blandness and smiles *paid*, consequently he took care to be always bland and smiling. He invariably shook hands with all his patients, and treated them with the greatest politeness. He said they brought grist to the mill that was grinding his fortune. He once told Philip—who could not help remarking that the Doctor always gave people medicine when they asked for it, even if there was nothing the matter—that he made as much money by the foolish fears of his patients as by their actual illnesses.

Ordinary people are much impressed by fine clothes, gold chains, and a big carriage with a pair of horses. Doctor Renhard, therefore, had his chain extra thick and long, his broadcloth of the finest, and jobbed a big carriage and big horses; even his coachman was broad and fat, and did credit to his master's astuteness. Doctor Renhard also took care, from the beginning even of his

career, to live in a big house, in a big Square, from whence he would go off to visit his patients.

He was essentially one of those men whose genius is in their breeches' pocket; otherwise speaking, all his efforts were directed to the grand problem of how to make money and how to keep it. With plenty of talent and an acute searching mind that would easily have raised him to the highest position attainable in medicine, the Doctor, nevertheless, preferred making money to acquiring fame, and had a notion, mistaken of course, that it was better to leave his children plenty of mopuses than to struggle into European celebrity, with the chance of his family being without bread and cheese when he died. I have heard people sneer at good Doctor Renhard for his care and prudence in sticking to the *business* side of his profession, at the very same time that they had always on their tongue the wise and generous old proverb—

‘Get money, and everything else shall be given unto thee!’

They blamed the Doctor for not refusing to attend the most slatternly wretch, occupying perhaps some back room in Gerrard Street, Soho, or St Giles, when *he* knew well that these were the very people who pay and give the least trouble. I have even heard them compare him to the Emperor Vespasian, who, when his son Titus remonstrated with him for receiving tribute from a peculiarly objectionable article of taxation, is said to have taken a sesterce from his purse and held it towards his hypercritical son, with the simple question, 'Does it smell?'

The Doctor rightly held that if people chose to call him in to attend them, he also had a right to ask and expect them to pay him for his services. He did not care to undertake a high class of practice for the simple reason that high-class patients often make one wait a long time before settling their medical account. In his daily work Dr Renhard was strictly professional and business-like, and at any time would sooner *give* a man half-a-crown than let him have a bottle of physic without paying for it.

But take him away from his professional business, and one was astonished to find how genial, how kind, and how truly generous Doctor Renhard could be. At least, so Philip Darrell very soon discovered.

## CHAPTER III.

BRINGS BEFORE THE READER'S FAVOURABLE NOTICE A  
WORTHY REPRESENTATIVE FAMILY OF THE GREAT MID-  
DLE CLASS.

**R**ING-A-RING ! Ring-a-ring ! Ring-a-ring !  
went the dinner-bell, a knock came to the  
surgery-door, the man-servant thrust in his  
head and shoulders and announced—

‘Dinner is ready, sir.’

‘Very well ; thanks,’ replied Philip, who  
instantly began washing and scrubbing his  
hands, then flew into the consulting-room,  
gave his hair a brush at the Doctor’s old-  
fashioned desk, settled his cravat, and thrust  
himself into the dining-room just as every one  
had sat down.

‘Ah ! how do you do, Mrs Marriott ?’ said  
Philip, stalking up to a lady at the table,  
one of the Doctor’s daughters, who had  
married a gentleman, now dead. They shook  
hands.

‘Very well, Phil, thanks,’ replied Mrs Marriott.

Down sat Philip in his chair with a plump, stretched out his legs, kicked his *vis-à-vis*’s shins, hauled his pedal extremities back and thrust them under his chair and then looked up the table to see what there was to eat.

‘Are you hungry, Philip?’ asked Mrs Renhard.

‘Pretty well,’ said Philip, with a smile.

‘Very well, then, I shall send you your dinner first, as you may be obliged to get up to patients,’ continued Mrs Renhard.

The Doctor’s wife was a brisk, short brunette, still good-looking, alert spite of her fifty years, and the kindest woman, after his own mother, that Philip had ever known.

‘Annie, pass this down to Philip, as Johnson has thought fit to go away just as he’s wanted.’

‘He’s gone to draw the stout, Ma,’ called out Maggie from the end of the table, wearing an injured look on her fat little face, probably still feeling the kick Philip had flung at her under the table.

Maggie was the youngest, verging on her twenty-second year, fat, short, dark-haired, dark-eyed, and with a regular little quick fierce temper. Her cheeks were soft-looking and rosy, and with her short stature helped to take off four years from her age, making her look no more than eighteen or nineteen.

Mrs Marriott was taller, just as dark as Maggie, and had a certain squareness of figure and face that reminded one of the Assyrians in the British Museum slabs. Her mouth looked simply like a slit cut between her two cheeks, the lips being very thin, and with very little colour in them.

The eldest daughter, Charlotte, was just such another dump as Maggie, only without her robustness or colour. She was simply a good kind girl.

The last to describe was the best; and that was owing to her extra advantage over the others of French education, and the society of ladies and gentlemen to whom she had been introduced whilst at school in France.

Fanny was taller than any of her sisters, with very handsome features. She was dark

like the others, and was the only one who was at all *gaie* or *enjouée*. She had acquired something of a Frenchwoman's vivacity and charm of manner, and really knew how to carry on a conversation without tiring her interlocutor or herself.

Unfortunately she had a terrible complexion—a tendency to raw redness of the nose and chin, and spots on the forehead, which thrust themselves prominently forward to notice when least required to do so. Each sister, as to mind, was the counterpart of the other. They knew how to dress, and how to dance; how to play, and how to sing. At least, they had been taught how to do so, and the Doctor often grew angry at the little use they made of the accomplishments he had paid so much to have drilled into them. They never played, and they never sang. It was impossible to stir up the depths of their natures, for there was no depth to sound—the plumb-line touched bottom as soon as dropped into their intellectual stream. Their talk was of dress, of the last fashions, of the movements of the royal family, whose members to

them were respectively—'Wales' and 'Arthur,' 'Victoria' and 'Albert,' 'Alfred' and 'Beatrice;' so that any outsider might imagine he heard them talking about their most intimate friends. They occasionally did some fancy work, and the books they read were chiefly written by the 'Authors of something else.'

It was impossible to interest them in the grand works of our modern masters of fiction. They loved Dickens because there was nothing in his books that they could not understand. They could not quite comprehend Thackeray, and did not care for George Eliot. As to the great French authors, they indeed were sealed books to them. Lamartine was a name only, Victor Hugo a horrid monster, Dumas to be utterly avoided. Poetry or philosophical works they never cared to look into, but prided themselves on their love for the royal family and their great respectability. There were two sons, but one was living abroad.

Such is the company round the dinner-table, to which the reader is respectfully presented.

‘Charlotte, have you heard when the Duchess is going to the opera?’ asked Maggie.

‘Yes; I think she is going on Thursday; but you had better look in the *Times*, they are sure to say something about her,’ replied Charlotte.

‘Do you know what Victoria wore at the last drawing-room?’ asked Mrs Marriott.

‘No! I’m not quite certain, though. Didn’t she wear gray satin, trimmed with Utrecht?’ said Maggie.

‘I think that was it,’ said Fanny.

And so on, and so on, *ad nauseam*.

Then the talk diverged from the Throne to the Church, and the Reverend Canon Sisbert was greatly criticized for his last very poor sermon on Mission Sunday.

Philip sat out all this, occasionally flinging a sarcasm or a joke up the table, which was seldom received with more than a faint sort of laugh.

Philip, who laughed at the whole tissue of nonsense about Queen, Princes, and Princesses — Philip, who was deeply imbued with the ideas

of Rights of Man and Social Contract, all this twaddle sickened and disgusted him. He would occasionally burst forth and tell them so, but all to no good; they simply smiled—‘It was Philip’s way’—and went on with the same nonsense as before.

It would not be saying too much, that of the girls each so resembled the other as to thought or intellect, that any man seeking a wife among them would have been thoroughly puzzled which to choose.

These girls were so shallow, to one living with them in the same house for a few days, that all their dulness and faults could soon be discovered; their virtues were so few as never to be found out. They were chaste, genteel, and dull.

At tea-time Maggie asked Philip whether he was going out on the next Sunday.

‘Oh, yes,’ said Philip, ‘you know it’s my turn this week; I am going down to Maidstone. I say, though, Vaughan, if you want to go anywhere specially, don’t let me prevent you, I can easily wait.’

‘Pass the toast,’ said Vaughan; ‘I don’t

think I care to go anywhere, thanks. Have you the butter in that dish?’

‘Yes! But I thought you spoke of riding to Kew?’ continued Philip.

‘Well! Rover hasn’t been out since yesterday, you know; my coachman is such a fool that he’s afraid to ride him,’ said Vaughan, who then subsided for a moment and munched his toast.

‘Maggie,’ cried he suddenly, ‘have you put the eggs in?’

‘Yes! they’ll soon be done now,’ replied Maggie.

‘How long have they been in? It’s no use giving me hard-boiled eggs, you know, I can’t digest them; it’s as much as I can manage to do to eat them just set,’ said Vaughan.

Maggie got up from the table and fished out the eggs. Of course they were hard, having been boiling for at least five minutes.

‘What’s the good of these to me,’ said Vaughan, ‘I can’t digest them, I’m blown out now with wind.’

Vaughan was the Doctor’s eldest son, as nice and pleasant a fellow as one could wish

to know. He and Philip had been at school in England for a short time together, and so they never left off their friendly familiarity even when Philip became the Doctor's assistant. He had, however, an amusing peculiarity of always being 'blown out with wind.' If you met him in the street, ten to one any inquiry after his health would elicit the reply, 'Blown out with wind. Can't eat without having an awful indigestion.' It was Vaughan's chronic state.

He was handsome, and the only fault one could find with him, perhaps, was that of being a little too much occupied with his *own* interests. He insisted a good deal on the pain *he* suffered from his indigestion, his fatigues, his wind; and was fond of expatiating on the excellencies of his horse Rover and his dog Jack. He diligently bought the latest editions of books and stacked them in a cupboard with the leaves uncut. Of magazines and periodical publications he subscribed to at least a dozen. These he had bound and put away like the rest of the books. But it certainly must be said that he rarely had any

time to read them, and so could not have done better than stow them carefully away.

Altogether he was a very kind-hearted fellow, merry, exceedingly droll at times, and never for a moment forgot to be kind and gentlemanly as well as familiar with his old school-fellow Philip Darrell. He followed the same profession as his father, but did not much care for it ; the work was occasionally too dirty, and at all times very close.

## CHAPTER IV.

PHILIP GOES TO MAIDSTONE, ENJOYS A MUSICAL EVENING,  
AND HAS A SHAKE HANDS WITH THE HEROINE.

SUNDAY came round, and as Vaughan had said he did not care to go out, Philip got up very early, made a careful toilet, combed and brushed his hair about five different times before he was satisfied with its appearance, and sallied forth to catch the nine o'clock train from London Bridge.

Walking down Holborn and Cheapside and King William Street, over the Bridge to the station, rather tired him as a beginning of the day. However, a glass of lemonade and a biscuit refreshed him, so he went to get his ticket—third class—and trudged on to the platform, was clipped, past through the gates, and ensconced himself safe in a carriage.

A whistle, a tug, and the train steamed

out of the station, not more than ten minutes later than it should have started.

The sun was blazing down and poured its heat into the carriages with an energy and perseverance that soon caused the ten miserable beings therein to pant and mop their heads and faces.

A woman, very fat, with a baby on her knees, also very fat (the baby of course), expressed her opinion several times in the question, 'It's very 'ot, ain't it, Mister?' which being addressed to Philip, who sat directly opposite to her, elicited from him a sort of acquiescent grunt.

Then the fat baby flung its head back with a dismal howl and refused to be comforted till it suddenly caught sight of Philip's spectacles, when it chuckled as heartily as it had dismally howled. Philip could not help snapping his finger and thumb at the plump morsel, which of course made it laugh the more.

Thereupon a man, with a squint, in the corner, remarked, to no one in particular: 'Aint he a fat 'un'—and as nobody raised a

voice in contradiction, he proceeded to wonder how old it was.

‘He’s only eleven months, sir,’ said the fat mother, beaming with pleasure to have her child noticed.

‘Aint, he though?’ said the man in the corner. ‘I’d never have guessed it.’

Upon this the mother proceeded to give a detailed account of her baby’s birth and subsequent career. Philip heard that the fat thing had five teeth already, and ‘was a-trying to cut a double tooth in the back of his head;’ and as a natural consequence the baby did not forget to keep the whole house awake over his double-tooth, so much so that his mother said she had often wished it *would* come *soon*, if it meant to come at all.

When this woman got out at Gravesend, everybody relapsed into silence. The object of the one-sided discourse having vanished the talkers held their tongues.

Through all this Philip was amused to notice that no one addressed his neighbour, or, indeed, any one else. They all spoke *into the air*, scattering their words as if they only

wanted to send them through the open windows, and not at all for the purpose of conversation.

Soon the hop-poles began to show themselves, and below Strood Philip noticed how thirsty the byne seemed. The hop strobiles were beginning to form, but were in danger of fading from want of water. The wheat fields looked magnificent, the heavy ears swaying to and fro to the soft breeze that came from the river. There all was calm and still, even a barge with its big red sail went so slowly up the stream that it heightened the general appearance of stillness. By Cuxton the train, even, seemed to have become drowsy and infected with the general desire for repose; for it ran along the rails less noisily and more smoothly than at first.

Then the train stopped, and the cry 'all tickets ready,' woke up those passengers who had half succumbed to sleep. The tickets all given up, the train moved on another thirty or forty yards and stopped again. They had reached Maidstone. Philip stepped leisurely on to the platform, waited a minute, saw by

the door a well-known face, walked calmly up and extended his hand.

‘How are you, old fellow?’ said he.

‘Oh, I’m fine! How are you?’ replied Allen Heyson. (Be it noted Heyson is pronounced *Hayson*.)

‘Jolly! and much obliged to you for meeting me,’ answered Philip. ‘Which way do we go? I really forget, it’s such a time since I was down here.’

‘Come along; I brought my trap up. I guessed you wouldn’t care to walk much this hot time.’

So Heyson, a fine manly looking fellow about twenty-three, Philip’s age, leading the way, they turned just the corner of the station and there was the trap, with a stout brown pony in the shafts, apparently impatient to be off.

At any rate the youngster who had been holding him remarked—

‘He’s a very hard ’un to ’old, sir,’ and consequently Allen Heyson pitched him an extra sixpence.

‘By Jove, Allen, how you’ve gone in for

beard and moustache,' said Philip, as he settled himself in the trap.

Heyson turned his head and laughed as he retorted, almost in the same tone of voice, 'By Jove, Phil, how you've gone in for whiskers, and moustache, and spectacles.'

'Come, now, don't chaff, there's a good fellow,' said Philip; 'my spectacles are always being attacked.'

'What do you wear 'em for, then?' asked Allen.

'What do I wear 'em for, my boy? Why, because they pay! Didn't I write you word what sort of family I was with now. Everything is a question of "How will it pay" in that house. And so when I presented myself for the situation my spectacles brought me twenty pounds a year more than I otherwise should have got,' and Philip laughed as he finished this defence of his spectacles.

'Oh, all right, then. I advise you to stick to them like a barnacle,' replied Allen.

By this time the pony had covered most of the ground between the station and the 'Woodlands,' and as they rattled past the

barracks Allen whispered that they would soon be there.

The two had been at school together in France, and great chums whilst there. Tom Darrell, Philip's brother, had been there at the same time with them, but had not kept up the schoolboy friendship.

'Here we are at last,' cried Allen, 'and there's Edith and Florry waiting at the gate. Jump down, old fellow, while I take the trap round. The girls will show you the way in, which you can't have forgotten yet, though.'

'How are you, Edith? and how do you do, Florry? you look well, I must say,' cried Philip, as the two rosy-cheeked girls came up to meet him.

'We're all right, Philip,' said they; 'come along into the house; Ma and Pa are both anxious to see you.'

Philip insisted upon each taking an arm and so marching up to the verandah.

'Ah! you sad dog,' cried old Mr Heyson through the dining-room window, 'you're not a bit altered; come through here and shake hands.'

‘Couldn’t do it, sir,’ said Philip; ‘must escort this convoy safe into port.’

‘No, you shan’t,’ said the girls, slipping away and darting into the house, so Philip stopped and walked in at the window, where a cordial grasping of hands took place all round.

Mr Heyson was a short, well-made man, getting rather square and stout, and verging upon his fiftieth year. He wore his beard and moustache clipped somewhat *à l’Américaine*, had clear gray eyes, a good complexion, rather dark; his dark hair was kept well and closely cut. Altogether he looked a hearty kind man, and what he looked he was. His wife was taller than he, moderately good-looking, with very dark hair, and brown eyes that were almost black: Philip always cherished a fond remembrance of her unpretending kindness to him. Oh, what a relief it was to him to find himself once more among people who were not afraid to laugh, who said what they thought so that every one could hear, and who never noticed Philip’s awkwardness. Perhaps with them he was not gauche and stupid, somehow he seemed

in his element here, and threw off the constrained 'assistant' manner that sat so heavily on him in London.

'My dear,' said Mr Heyson to his wife, 'haven't you anything to offer Philip after his journey?'

'Of course I have, dear,' replied she. 'What do you like best, Philip; you're grown such a man that I don't like to offer you the glass of milk you used to be so fond of.'

'And of which I'm just as fond as ever, Mrs Heyson,' replied Philip, 'so please give me a cup of milk. We can't get it without water in London, you must know.'

Florry ran out into the dairy and soon came back with a cool glass of beautiful milk.

'Thanks,' said Philip, and betook himself to a good deep draught.

'Ah! how fine!' he exclaimed, as he set down the glass, three parts emptied.

'At it again, are you,' cried a voice from behind him, Allen having just stepped in from looking to the horse and trap. 'What a fellow you are for milk! I want something stronger than that, mother, please,' continued Allen, so

he quietly filled up a bumper of claret, and with a 'Here's to our jolly good healths,' tossed it off with evident relish.

'What shall you do with yourself till dinner time, Philip?' said Mrs Heyson.

'Philip must come into the garden, mother, and see Allen's workhouse,' said Edith.

'Allen's workhouse!' cried Philip; 'what-ever do you mean?'

'You must go with them, Philip,' said Mr Heyson, 'as I can see your curiosity is strongly excited already, and we may fear an explosion: if you remain here much longer.'

'Very well, thanks, I will,' replied Philip; and Edith, Florry, Allen, and he sallied forth through the long passage into the garden.

'How do you think the governor is looking, Phil?' asked Allen.

'Just the same; only, of course, a little older, than when he came over to France,' replied Philip.

'Do you see Allen's workhouse, now?' cried Edith, as they reached the bottom of the garden.

Philip looked before him, and beheld a

small summer-house kind of building, erected at the right angle of the garden palings, just overlooking the river, which rolled lazily along about half a stone's throw beyond the garden end.

'Why, that's something new, Allen, isn't it?' said Philip; 'I certainly don't remember it when I was here last.'

'Of course you don't,' said Allen, 'it hasn't been fixed up more than six months. Just look in and say what you think of it,' and with that he threw open the door.

It was a square room about fifteen by fifteen feet, and tastefully fitted up with shelves, hooks, and pegs innumerable. Two or three good fishing-rods, disjointed, were thrust in one corner, with some small nets hanging on a hook over them. A rook-rifle graced one side of the room, a couple of pairs of foils and basket-sticks showed more war-like tendencies on the other. Half-a-dozen rows of deal shelves, stained to imitate mahogany, decorated the third side, and supported rows of well-thumbed books. Lastly, a square table with movable flaps, a couple of chairs and

a spittoon, completed the furniture of the room.

Yet, I forget! A pipe and case and a fat tobacco jar were on the table above mentioned.

On the river-side a long window, with old French shutters fitted outside, threw light and air into the snugery.

Philip declared himself delighted with it, and expressed a determination to smoke a cigar in it before he left.

After that they strolled through the big fruit-garden, chatting and laughing, and plucking the fat luscious cherries, that sometimes knocked against their heads as they walked under the trees. At such direct invitation, who could help raising a hand to pluck them? and once plucked, how resist eating them?

Time flew, though, and soon the dinner-bell clanged through the house and all hurried in. There was just five minutes to run upstairs and wash hands and brush hair, and get rid of the cherry juice, before the second bell would ring—so, of course, the above programme was immediately carried out.

‘Philip, you sit by me,’ said Mrs Heyson ; ‘I seldom see you now, so I must make the most of you ;’ and obedient Philip, ‘cute dog, who knew how well he would be looked after, instantly did so. Mr Heyson, however, raised his voice in protest, but was instantly talked down by the femininity of the party, who declared that ‘mother did quite right.’ And as one sat next to Philip and the other opposite him, perhaps they were not altogether impartial in their decision.

For some little time the conversation rather languished, consisting chiefly of such remarks as follows :—

‘Phil, do you take anchovy?’

‘Yes, thank you ; and may I trouble you for the melted butter?’

‘Philip, a glass of wine with you.’

Another interval of silence. Servant changes course. Fresh remarks.

‘My dear, you haven’t given Philip any lemon. Don’t you care for any bacon, Phil?’ from Mrs Heyson.

‘No, thanks,’ says Philip, ‘I prefer the veal alone.’

‘Please yourself, my dear boy.’

By this time appetite is somewhat appeased, and conversation becomes more brisk.

‘What’s the last epidemic, Phil?’ cried Mr Heyson from the top of the table, at which all laughed.

‘Well, I fancy it’s nothing more than “Who’s your hatter?” or, “How are your poor feet?”’ answered Phil.

Mrs Heyson laughed, and immediately told Philip he had quite misunderstood the question.

‘Didn’t you ask “What’s the epidemic?” my dear?’ she said to her husband.

‘Yes! of course I did,’ replied he.

‘Well, Philip has only told us what the last *mania* is,’ continued Mrs Heyson.

‘I won’t *remain here* any longer,’ cried Philip, if I have to be so exact.

‘No punning, Philip. *Mania* and “*remain here*” won’t do,’ said Allen.

‘But, now, seriously,’ said Mr Heyson, ‘what is the last epidemic?’

‘Pon my word, sir, I don’t know. I may say there’s lots of measles about, and scarlet

fever, and small pox, and plague of London. Probably a great number of people are affected by this hot weather. Certainly *very* old folks make up their mind to die, and really manage it very creditably. I suppose very old folks haven't much mind left to make up, so do it quickly and well.'

'Philip, you're incorrigible,' said Mrs Heyson. 'I'd better give you some of this cherry and currant pie to prevent you saying any more nonsense.'

'I'll willingly be quiet for such a bribe, and stop the *current* of my speech for such a *cherry*-ished dish,' cried Philip.

'Mother! don't give him any pie till he apologizes for those horrid puns—*current* and *cherry*-ished. Shocking, isn't it?'

But Allen's affected horror only made everybody laugh the more at Philip's absurd jokes, and he got the pie at once without apology.

Dinners will come to an end, even when lengthened and seasoned by fun and laughter, and Mrs Heyson, soon after dessert was on the table, left the room with Edith and Florry, and the men remained by themselves.

‘Bring your chair round here, Phil, it will be better for talking. You, Allen, fill his glass. Which will you take, Phil? Hock, or Moselle, or Claret?’

‘Oh, Hock! by all means. It’s not so sweet as the Moselle, and I’m still thirsty. Thanks.’

‘Well, my boy, I’m very glad to see you with us. How you have grown since your last visit. Quite a man!’ said old Heyson, as Philip drew his chair up and crossed his legs.

‘Yes, sir, I’ve had to work hard since that time,’ said Philip. ‘You know I was about commencing my studies at University College when that last crash in America nearly ruined my poor mother. What little she had been able to get together of my father’s property, a kind, but rather officious friend persuaded her to invest in the shares of the San Luis Western Railroad. Certainly everything looked fair and plain-sailing, but twelve per cent dividend and a bonus every nine months did not somehow quite succeed; the whole thing has gone to smash, and all mother could realize was about a thirtieth of the price she had paid for.

those shares. Of course, you know, Tom and I had to set to work to help her.'

'Very hard to bear, such reverses,' remarked Mr Heyson.

'Well, perhaps so,' said Philip; 'but for my own part I fancy I have worked along very well. Friends have been kind to me. I fortunately procured a good situation near the hospital, and have been able to follow up my studies. Certainly not so well as I wished, but still sufficiently to enable me to go up for examination, and that you know is the grand thing.'

'True! It is the grand thing, and I sincerely hope you will pull through. If I can be of any use to you in any way, Philip,' said Mr Heyson, 'remember I shall feel offended that you should apply to any one else for help.'

Philip grasped the old man's hand, and pressed it warmly, but assured him that he hoped to manage by his own exertions, if not, he would come to him.

'Well, now you have finished that little bit,' said Allen, 'I vote we join the ladies.'

Mother, I dare say, is having forty winks, but the girls will be certain to be wide awake, as it isn't every day we have Phil down here.'

All laughed and rose from table, Mr Heyson going up-stairs to his wife's room, and Allen and Philip sauntering out into the garden. Edith and Florence were found cosily seated on the grass under a big cherry tree in the middle of a sort of group of fruit-trees, so that they were amply shaded. Allen and Philip threw themselves down beside them. Edith put down the work she was reading when they came up. Philip took it up to see what book it was. He had been so used to surfeits of Dickens and Trollope, that he was agreeably surprised to see such a title as 'Corona Tragica.'

'Why, this is one of Lope de Vega Carpio's works! How do you like it? And how do you like Spanish? I didn't know you knew it,' said Philip.

'I don't care much for that,' said Edith, 'it is rather serious; I like his comedies best.'

'Yes, so do I,' rejoined Philip.

'I was not aware that you knew Spanish,'

said Edith, in such a tone that all laughed—it seemed like a retort for Philip's similar remark.

‘Si, Señorita! Hay mucho tiempo que conozcolo,’ replied Philip with a bow *à l’Española*, which turned the laugh against Edith.

‘Who do you think is coming to tea to-night, Philip?’ said Florry, by way of diversion.

‘Can’t imagine, I assure you,’ replied he; ‘I know so few people down here.’

‘Why, Adèle De Brenne,’ said Florence.

‘You don’t say so!’ cried Philip; ‘why, I haven’t heard the slightest bit of news about the De Brennes since I was at school there. Why, she must be a big girl now.’

‘Oh, yes, she is, I can assure you.’

‘Do you remember how old she was, Allen, when we left?’ asked Philip.

‘I don’t think she was more than five,’ replied he, ‘but now one would think she was quite grown up.’

‘Yet she can’t be very old. It is just nine years since I left Bourville, so that Adèle is about fifteen,’ continued Philip.

‘Yes, that is her age, Phil, but she looks a little older,’ said Edith.

‘Didn’t her father, old De Brenne, kill himself somehow, by accident, with a pipe?’

‘Yes. He was coming down-stairs, and as he reached the last stair he fell forward—the carpet was loose or something—and drove the clay pipe stem into his throat. Inflammation set in, and he died the next day. Fortunately he was a careful man, and had saved money, so that his wife and daughter can live decently. You know Madame was English?’

‘Oh, yes! I remember that,’ said Philip.

‘Well, and not only English, but a native of Maidstone,’ continued Florry; ‘so that she came over here soon after her husband’s death, and began giving private lessons in French and music. And they have got on very well.’

Of course Philip was very pleased to hear news of old friends, and even hinted to Allen, *sotto voce*, that he would like to go to his room to tidy up a bit.

So, as it was past four, and Adèle was

expected every minute, Allen and he went indoors.

Philip spent some little time brushing his hair and tying and retying his cravat.

Then Edith's voice summoned the two young fellows down, by calling out that Adèle was impatiently waiting to see her old play-mate Philip.

Down they came at once, Philip first, and as he reached the bottom of the stairs a lovely fair-haired girl sprung towards him, threw her arms round his neck, and before he could recover from his astonishment, kissed him on each cheek, then flew away laughing.

'Est-ce que tu m'as oubliée, par hasard, Philippe?' cried she.

'Ah! non! pas du tout. Je te reconnais bien, Adèle, tu es toujours la même. On ne m'a pas embrassé si fort que ça depuis que j'ai quitté Bourville,' said Philip.

'C'est bien, alors, tu n'auras pas trouvé d'autre bonne amie,' rejoined Adèle, so came back to him, and hooking arms, marched him in to tea.

Adèle De Brenne was really beautiful;

her light brown, almost golden, hair fell over her shoulders in rippling profusion. Her complexion was exquisitely clear, she was somewhat pale, and her features generally were lovely. The nose was well-formed and straight, the brow good, the lips full and coloured ruby red. Long lashes shaded the clear blue eyes that flashed brightly under her well-marked brows.

And yet a perfect child, merry, *insouciant*, and as pure-minded as ever God created a human being.

After tea Mr Heyson readily agreed to her request that they should have some music.

So Adèle sat down to the-piano at once, and, without music, played with pure expression one of Beethoven's lovely Sonatas.

Philip sat entranced by the piano, and listened in a perfect ecstasy.

Then Mr Heyson asked her to accompany him in a duo, piano and violin, but Adèle insisted upon giving up her seat to Edith, who, she said, played much better.

She was looking for a seat near the piano when Philip beckoned to her, so she came and

without the slightest affectation of coquetry sat down on his knees, and with Philip's arm holding her round the waist, listened to an adagio movement which formed the duo.

Mr Heyson played most exquisitely, and Edith was a careful and splendid accompanist.

Then Allen brought in his violoncello, and they played an elaborate trio with great expression.

After that Philip was requested to add his contingent, so he sat him down after begging leave, laughingly, of Adèle, and played and sang Schubert's 'Erlking.' His voice was a baritone with half tenor compass, and the song just suited him, so that he sang it pretty well. As his time was nearly up they would not allow him to leave the piano till he had given them the 'Wanderer,' and two little songs of his own composition.

After that Adèle sang two French Romances, the 'Masque de Fer' and 'Daniel.' Last, and perhaps most beautiful, Edith played Beethoven's 'Sonate Pathétique,' with an infinite tenderness and purity of expression. All felt sad as it ended—Philip most of all,

for he thought of what he was leaving for the dulness of his daily work. Laughingly he said to Mr Heyson, 'Don't you think we have been very wicked to sing and play on Sunday?'

'No, Philip, I do not think so,' replied Mr Heyson. 'Seriously speaking, my dear boy, I conceive that God is never displeased at his creatures' use of the gifts he has given them. Whether on a Sunday or a week day I hold it is just the same. I, and my family, from my example, laugh, joke, sing, play, and fiddle just as much on Sunday as any other day. We simply, to my thinking, show our appreciation and enjoyment of the life our Creator has allotted to us.'

Philip could not but agree, and thought his host completely in the right.

Adèle took her place by him at supper, and soon won him back to the old allegiance from which Philip, perhaps, had never cared or wished to be free. In the spirit of girlish joy and artlessness she claimed him again as her cavalier, and with a feeling of mingled pleasure and pain Philip vowed himself happy in her choice.

Allen Heyson had not been quite so joyous since tea-time as he was in the afternoon. Perhaps he felt slighted that Adèle had said so few words to him and had shown herself quite engrossed with her old play-fellow.

So the supper was ended, and Philip made the round of the table, with cordial hand-grasps from all and an impetuous mad kind of kiss from Adèle.

Heyson went with him to the station, and at first, as they walked briskly on, neither spoke; then Allen remarked in a peculiarly constrained tone of voice,

‘I say, old fellow, little Adèle De Brenne seems quite taken with you.’

Philip turned, noticing the strangely altered voice, and answered with a laugh,

‘Why, my dear fellow, she’s nothing but a child, and only sees in me an old playmate whom she had not thought to meet again.’

Nevertheless, as Philip was being slowly dragged up to London, the image of that ‘child’ was ever present with him. Her soft hand-clasp and dainty kiss lingered with him, and long after he had turned into bed

he lay awake that night, dreaming and planning a fresh life and building wondrous 'castles in the air,' where he and Adèle might be as one.

Can it be wondered that after this, every day he could be spared from work, and certainly every second Sunday, found him at Maidstone, growing more and more infatuated with Adèle's gentle beauty, she also perhaps learning to love him even more than she used to love her old playmate? One thing was peculiar in this intimacy, Philip had never once seen Madame De Brenne. She was always 'ill' when he wished to do so.

## CHAPTER V.

A FURTHER GLANCE AT DOCTOR BENHARD AND VAUGHAN,  
AND A LITTLE DETAIL CONCERNING THEIR METHOD OF  
ANSWERING UNWELCOME MESSAGES.

THERE is such an atmosphere of petty deceit and barefaced equivocation breathed in the surgery of a modern general practitioner that, to the uninitiated, it must present, when disclosed and analyzed, a fruitful subject for speculative thought.

The old distinctions of rich and poor have become so blurred and vague that modern life everywhere presents the same problem—Which are the rich, and which the poor?

Only this state of society would give birth to the modern practitioner, of whom the grades and rank are just as difficult to fix and define as are the distinctions between rich and poor themselves.

The grand maxim of ancient doctors was that the rich man's fees should cover the

expense of gratis attendance on the poor man.

As our social life, with its wonderful variations and grades, grew into being, this type of medical men went on rapidly and surely diminishing. It became impossible to distinguish between those who could afford a fee, and those who could not. Besides, there was the difficulty sometimes, that an offer to remit all fees only caused pain and humiliation, often enough angrily expressed by the person sought to be benefited.

So the old line was abandoned, and the noble profession of Medicine soon began to swarm with men whose one and sole idea was to *make money*. No matter from whom or whence, they came to get money, and by dint of application to so laudable an object many succeeded. Of these our friend Doctor Renhard was a worthy representative. He had the faculty not only of making, but of keeping money. He had no scruple, no nicety of feeling, that could prevent him from venturing anywhere and to any one for a modest fee of 3s. 6d. It mattered little to him whether he

sat by a bed, whose dirty sheets, frowsy blankets, and patched counterpane, attested the poverty of those that slept therein, provided always that he felt moderately certain of being paid. As well from the toil-hardened hand of the labourer, as the jewelled paw of a Jewess, the fee was equally welcome and accepted. Either Doctor Renhard would not, or could not, take a somewhat high class of practice. Malicious-minded friends said that he *could* not. It was so easy to go into back rooms and garrets, shops, parlours, and the dwelling of the virtuous keepers of public-houses, and take hold of a wrist, while the patient's admiring gaze is fixed on the fine long gold chain and brave gold watch, as his pulse's beatings are counted or *supposed to be counted*; quietly to ask a few questions, and in ten minutes' time walk out and step into one's carriage, with the feeling that yet another three or four shillings' fee has been earned! Certainly such class of practice is not over-nice, but then it is *so safe*! So said the Doctor's detractors.

But Philip found the Doctor very different

from this. He had heard that his employer was a grasping, covetous man, who would do anything or *anybody* for money. And he had come to him with that opinion. It was quickly changed to admiration of the Doctor's clear-sighted skill, his methodical, business-like habits, and quiet, straightforward march on the road to Wealth. Besides all this Philip very soon pierced through the crust of slightly artificial blandness that the Doctor always displayed to his patients, and found a warm heart full of kindness and discriminating generosity beating under the false exterior. Many a generous hidden deed did Philip find out. Many a patient, who had once been well-to-do and paid conscientiously, were visited by him and received back from his *left hand* the modest fee they had placed in his right hand. And all so kindly and pleasantly done, that it did not seem in the least derogatory for the one to pay or the other to pay back.

Vaughan Renhard, as has once before been said, did not particularly care for his business or profession, call it what you will ; but even he could not free himself from its routine.

He showed his dislike for his work, however, principally by a species of analytical grumblings. Such, for instance, as holding up to scorn and contempt the ridiculously small remuneration he obtained for his services.

Usually he would expatiate on his wrongs at breakfast, and the more earnestly after having turned out during the night to attend a case of midwifery. Whilst buttering his toast he would exclaim,

‘You can’t believe, Philip, how devilish seedy I feel! I know it’s killing me! A man with a weak digestion like mine has no chance!’

‘Well, Vaughan, it’s some consolation to think that another case is over. Besides, it’s another guinea earned!’ said Philip.

‘Another guinea!’ sneered Vaughan; ‘it’s really perfectly absurd. The idea of a fellow going out night after night for a guinea. To work six or eight hours, perhaps more, all for a guinea! And all the time to feel blown out like a balloon!’ and then he would grunt disgustedly and make a vicious cut at his toast. Suddenly up would again come the inevitable

topic, and Vaughan would proceed to demonstrate that, when one had counted up two or three false alarms, usually in the night, then six hours' work, also, probably, in the night, then five or six visits afterwards, why, it wasn't more than five shillings for the actual work, and half-a-crown for the after visits! Of course all would agree that it was hard on a fellow, and if the servant came to announce, 'A patient for Mr Vaughan,' he would grumble, get up, and—take in hand another guinea *accouchement*.

Days and weeks soon pass when a man is engaged in a certain routine of work ; all the happier and quicker when he knows that the ending of every week means so much additional money earned.

Philip's routine of daily work was to compound physic, wrap it up in white paper, and present it with a bow to the attendant patient. After that, to do the same again.

When the patients ceased their morning visits, and Doctor Renhard had set out to make his, Philip beat up pill-mass and made pills, or mixed powders of jalap and calomel and

gum and calomel, and weighed up certain quantities and packed them into those familiar paralleliped forms so known to all mothers and nurses of children.

Then, when no pills had to be made, nor powders to be packed, Philip buried himself deep in the study of Iliac regions or of the convolutions of the Brain ; or else, carefully bent his intellect to the comprehension of anatomy, taking as model the dusty old skeleton in the Doctor's consulting-room cupboard.

Sometimes Philip would make quaint problems for solution, as to whence, for instance, came the skeleton's bones ; and had even composed some curious tales thereanent, brimming over with details of the dead-house and the dissecting-room. How Jones's body promenaded (in imagination) the churchyard, on Robinson's thigh-bones, Jackson's tibia, Brown's fibula, tarsus, metatarsus, and toes. Probably Smith, the mortal enemy of Jones during his life-time, still pursued him in death by fixing his neck and head on Jones's shoulders. How ludicrous this seemed to him

may be better illustrated by a student's very irreverent remark, after one of these composite skeletons or bodies had been collected by the old fellow who used to go round the dissecting-room.

'I say, old fellow,' said the student, 'won't you catch it hot on Resurrection-day!'

'I don't see why, sir,' said the old chap. 'Can you tell me?'

'Of course! Why, just look here, now. When Jones, Brown, and Robinson arise, how will they fix their bodies together? Jones will be running after Brown on Robinson's legs; these will suddenly leave him to cut after the body that Smith has appropriated, and as very probably some one of their limbs will be bottled up somewhere in a musty old museum, won't there just be a scrimmage as to which shall be complete. Then, as they'll know you were the cause of the dispersion of their limbs and bodies, why, they'll just set upon you and divide you between them.'

The old fellow's horrified look was always considered inimitable, and the very cream of the joke. Such odd fancies, suggested occa-

sionally by his studies, helped to beguile the time.

In the evenings came fresh sources of amusement. The calm, cool manner in which the Doctor would ask a patient to be seated while his or her medicine was being prepared, assuring him with unmoved face that 'some addition shall be made to your medicine,' and then, turning to Philip, say, pointing to the prescription—

'Mr Darrell, will you make this "drachmam" and that "semi-drachmam?"'

Such, *be it noted*, being precisely what had *first* been ordered. Philip once had shown himself bewildered by such a strange method of increasing the strength of a mixture by leaving it just as before, and ventured to ask for an explanation.

'Oh!' said Dr Renhard, 'I fancied that you seemed puzzled. This is my rule. When I write a prescription, and the patient has been taking the medicine ordered for some little time, *he* thinks a change is needed, *I* know that it isn't. But if I told him so, he would be displeased; so that when you see

my finger pointing to drachm, scruple, grain, or minim signs in a prescription, and I tell you to make the drachm, drachmam, or the fifteen minims, minimas quindecim, it simply means that you are to dispense the mixture just as it is.'

'Thank you, Doctor,' said Philip, and treasured it up in his memory.

Occasionally a patient or a messenger would be ushered in, with a voluble demand for the Doctor or for Mr Vaughan to come immediately to see Mr Jenkins, or old Mrs Brown. As it happens these are patients who don't pay, consequently one would fancy it was easy to be rid of them and say that one does not care to go. But, the Doctor used to say, that would simply offend them and through them others; so that he would assure them that 'he was very sorry he could not go, as he had just had a message to call on Mrs Winthropp, who "expected" every minute, but he would try to look round in the morning.' Said message *ré* Mrs Winthropp never having been received. Or else there was a consultation in ten minutes' time, in Harley

Street, at which the Doctor was obliged to be present, &c. &c.

Such were the subterfuges used ; and insensibly Philip, who would not have lied on his own account to save his life, fell into the same habits ; and without any prompting would assure patients, whom the Doctor or Vaughan Renhard did not care at the moment to see, that the Doctor was at an operation for compound fracture of the skull, or that Vaughan was away at a 'lady's case ;' when both Doctor and son were eating their dinner or tea in the dining-room.

## CHAPTER VI.

TOM DARRELL.

ONE morning when Philip came down to breakfast he found a letter awaiting him. The writing was familiar, the post-mark 'Glasgow,' in which town Philip had no friends. As folks usually do with a letter that puzzles them a bit, he attentively studied the outside, the post-mark, the stamp, the date of sending, &c., &c., and after all found that he should have to open it.

Then an exclamation of surprise burst from him, and sitting down he read the letter. Subsequent events made me acquainted with its contents, so that it is right to give it here in proper order.

*'Glasgow,*

*'August 21st, 18—.*

'MY DEAR BROTHER,

'I CAN see your start of surprise when

you read the heading of this letter. You think me still in the States, and the sudden notice that I am in Glasgow will, of course, astonish you.

‘Pon my life I could not stand the Americans any longer. There was no decent society to mix with, and the fellows out there are perfect dummies. All they know how to do is to play pool, cut-throat Euchre, smoke, drink whiskey, and occasionally, by way of diversion, make a smooth hole through some one with a revolver bullet, or let daylight into some one’s inside with a bowie knife. I like fun, but I’d sooner be hanged at once than again run the risks I have escaped from with a whole skin. I shall, however, tell you more when I get to London, so shall close this note with asking you to let mother know I’m back.

‘Yours truly,

‘TOM DARRELL.

‘P.S. I’m awfully short of cash. Can you send me ten dollars? Address—“General Post Office, to be called for.”’

The first impression on Philip’s mind after

reading this letter was one of utter astonishment; then came reflexion, and the first query was—‘What has Tom been doing that he has to leave America?’ The postscript, too, rather troubled Philip. Ten dollars, so coolly requested, were not earned in a day, and he had a sort of uneasy feeling that once gone they would not come back soon or easily. However, he presently assured himself that there was no help for it, Tom had come back, Tom must be written to, Tom must be helped. All these ideas followed in simply natural sequence. It was so usual for Tom to hail from some place where his friends least expected to find him. To be also in a constant state of wanting to be written to, and to possess a never-failing power of asking for help. Somehow, too, he always got what he asked for. With the best intentions of paying back what he borrowed, he yet never kept his promise to do so, from the simple fact that he never had the wherewithal to spare to pay his debts. Consequently, he was perennially indebted to his friends. Philip had helped him till he was almost weary of doing so, but the hand had

been so frequently dipped into his pocket for that purpose that it had at last grown into a species of habit.

So that Philip drew a cheque for the amount, got Doctor Renhard to cash it, and trudged down to the post-office and sent off an order payable to Tom Darrell from Philip Darrell, residing at No. ——— Square. That done, he came back to work with the disagreeable feeling that his small banking account—for Philip was a saving, careful fellow, and so banked and got four per cent. for his money—was made so much smaller by the last cheque he had drawn.

No acknowledgment came from Glasgow, and Philip, after waiting three days, began to be quite fidgetty and afraid lest he should have to send off another two pounds; but about eleven o'clock one Wednesday morning came a knock and a strong pull at the visitor's bell. Instinctively Philip opened the surgery door to look up the Hall, the servant ran up, the door swung back, and a strange, odd-looking figure stood looking straight at him. A voice said—

‘Is Mr Darrell in?’

‘Yes, sir. Will you walk this way?’

Somebody in a great thick sort of brown pilot jacket stalked down the Hall after the servant. Philip stared at the man, unable to make out whom it was. ‘How are you, old fellow?’ cried a voice, and Philip instantly recognized his brother.

He jumped forward, grasped his hand, and they kissed (they had both been to school in France) each other on the lips—Philip with a strange feeling at his heart of surprise and dismay. Besides, after his brother’s kiss, a peculiar flavour clung to his lips, and for a little time he could not make out what it was.

Tom Darrell came into the surgery, shook hands with Doctor Renhard, who gazed at him with a comical look of surprise, and sat himself on the bench.

The Doctor was to be excused for his expression of astonishment, for certainly no one could help it who had known Tom Darrell before he left England, and who saw him that morning in August when he walked into Dr Renhard’s surgery.

He wore this peculiar long brown pea-jacket, a dark waistcoat very much open, a gray woollen shirt, a turn-down collar, rather dirty, with a loose soft silk cravat tied in a sailor's knot, and the ends hanging down over his shirt. Long American boots with his trousers, a dirty gray in colour, thrust into them, a tall strange-material American hat, completed his *cap-à-pié* equipment.

He left England with whiskers and slight moustache; now, a long Yankee billy-goat beard stuck out from his chin, and his moustache had grown tremendously at the ends. His face was brown from the sea voyage, and his hands the same colour, with a dash of dirt added, as was natural to a man who had travelled third class from Glasgow, and had not spent much time at his toilet.

Presently he got up and shot an immense squirt-like discharge of brown-coloured saliva into the fire-place. Then Philip understood what the strange taste and odour on his lips was. He at once went to the wash-hand basin, and sluiced water on his lips till the taste was gone.

'I guess I feel fatigued,' said Tom. 'The cars in this country are beastly. I'd not like to send cattle much in them.'

'How did you come?' asked Philip.

'I travelled third-class from Glasgow, and was never so fixed up in my life before. I couldn't stretch my legs much, and had to sit bolt upright most of the way,' answered Tom.

It is impossible to transcribe or accentuate the peculiarities of his words. Only those who have heard Americans, of a common class, can imagine the intonation with which he spoke.

Dr Renhard asked him to stay to lunch, as he must be hungry and tired after his journey. Tom readily acquiesced and thanked him. Dr Renhard went out shortly afterwards, and Philip and Tom were left together to continue their talk. Philip could do little more than sit and listen, and shudder every time his brother expectorated, which he did rather frequently.

As he looked at him, Philip could not help marvelling that notwithstanding his dirty

coat, his rough and ready style of dress, his begrimed hands, still Tom Darrell looked handsome and gentlemanly. Before, he had been a handsome and accomplished Englishman, now he was a handsome, but less gentlemanly, American.

As he told his story, Philip plainly perceived why he did not like America, or its inhabitants—and the reason of his non-success. He opened, so he told his brother, a commission agency with a young fellow of the name of Franks, for the purchase and sale on commission of hides, tallow, and grease of all kinds. Franks furnished most of the capital, Tom undertaking the calling upon customers, and collecting the cash, while his partner kept the books. Little tales of *jolly* excursions, horse-riding, sleighing, billiards, and an exciting account of a certain night spent in playing Euchre, enabled Philip to read between the lines of his brother's florid account of *his* earnestness and straightforwardness, and of the unconscionable baseness and duplicity of everybody else with whom he came in contact. Franks, of course, got tired of finding his bills

on customers only too often returned protested, and most frequently accompanied by a note to the effect, that the account on which he presumed to draw had been paid and settled weeks before. Of course it was simply owing to Franks that the book-keeping was badly done, and the amounts not placed properly to the customers' credit. Anyhow, the commission agency failed.

Then came a rambling account of what he had done and tried to do, of how some man threatened his life, so that he was obliged to put a bullet through his pistol arm to spoil his aim, and of the consequences of this little affair forcing him to leave Cincinnati, and cut away into New York State, where, after a long period of 'keeping out of harm's way', he found means—how he did not say—to embark and take passage to Glasgow, whence he had made his way to London.

Such in substance was his own account of his American experiences. The people there were a set of rowdies, thieving, swindling fellows whom it was impossible to associate with on anything like terms of equality. To

Philip this 'equality' seemed to be simply a question of more or less quick and straight shooting. As to an inquiry about mother, Philip told him she was well, and only a little surprised that he should return without having first apprised her of his intention, more especially as he had not written to her for six months previously.

Tom had lunch with the Renhards, who were all intensely amused at his odd way of talking and the peculiarities of his dress.

After lunch Vaughan came in, and Philip got leave to go to the station with his brother. As they walked down to the omnibus, people turned and stared at them, and laughed. 'What the devil are they grinning at?' said Tom.

'I'm afraid they're rather astonished at your chimney-pot,' answered Philip.

In the omnibus the same thing. When they got to Bishopsgate station, a porter sidled up to Tom with a wink and said—

'Guess you hail from the States, Captain.'

'Guess I do,' answered Tom. 'What'll you liquor up with?' and off he went with the

porter to the refreshment bar. Philip waited outside. Presently when Tom and the porter emerged, he positively had to look carefully and near before he recognized him.

They waited about for a quarter of an hour till the train started, Philip saw his brother into a carriage, saw him strike a light and soon puff away with vigour at a long cigar, to purchase which he had spent half of his last sixpence after treating the porter. Philip had to pay his fare to Chelmsford and give him two or three shillings as he got into the train.

Then as the train slowly rolled out of the station Philip turned on his heel and stumped away to the omnibus, puzzled at the change that had come to his brother, and filled with a vague presentiment that an element had been introduced into his life that would be a source of future danger and misery. He could not help thinking of Tom's handsome, engaging features, his agreeable manners and light-hearted way of looking at everything, and unconsciously perhaps he contrasted those elements of a perpetual 'letter of recommendation' with his own homely face, his awkwardness of

manner, his reluctant tongue, that seemed sometimes rather an organ of *thought* than of speech; and, perhaps, his sadness at these reflections may have been partly caused by an uncontrollable feeling of envy, that in all the outward attributes of a man he should be so markedly inferior to his brother.

So that when he got back to —— Square he felt relieved at once to find four patients waiting for medicine, and Dr Renhard vainly attempting, looking all the while over, and not through his spectacles, to find the bottles and drugs he required. Philip welcomed the work as a means of banishing the unpleasant thoughts that had invaded his brain on the return from Bishopsgate Station.

The following evening Philip had a letter from Mrs Darrell, telling him that Tom had arrived safely in time for an early tea, and that now he was washed and had a clean shirt to his back, it was wonderful to see the immense difference it made in him.

‘I should think it would,’ said Philip as he read this.

The letter went on to say that some ready-

made clothes had been ordered from an outfitter's, and that she expected Tom would soon look all right again. It concluded by remarking how kind and attentive Tom was to her, fetching and doing everything he could for her.

The next thing, said the *postscript*, was to find something for him to do.

As usual, the pith of the letter was in the postscript. Certainly it was easy to say, find something for him to do, but the question presented itself at once of 'What can, and will, Tom do?'

For some time this remained *in statu quo*. Tom advertised, and proved to Philip by the very style of his advertisements that either business was carried on very oddly in the United States, or that Tom had not learnt much about it, notwithstanding his boasts of experience. After a while he was persuaded to allow Philip to advertise for him, and although Tom openly expressed his opinion that Philip knew nothing about business, and was only fit for poring over dry books, and studying from morning till night; and that in fact he was a bit of a fool (be it noted that

Philip had actually refused recently to lend his brother another five dollars), still the advertisement *took*, and Tom had five answers to it.

Luckily one of these was from a man who had risen from nothing, who had lived in America and made money there; and Tom's qualifications of book-keeping and French correspondence being the very requisites to suit J. Allerton & Company's style of trade, they took him on trial at a moderate salary.

Here was Tom's great chance, he saw it, and, for the time, wisely exerted himself to please his employers. In this he quickly and thoroughly succeeded. His appearance, now he was well and properly dressed, was very pleasing; his manners had a certain bluntness that simulated the frankness on which John Allerton, the head of the firm of J. A. & Co., piqued himself very much. The element of coarseness in it pleased him, coming from a man born a gentleman, as it afforded him the best excuse possible for his own vulgarity.

'Look at Darrell,' he would often say to his friend and partner, Frank Morson, 'there's

no damned humbug about him. All fair and on the nail, sir, as open as the day. No damned airs of pride about Tom Darrell. Why, he'd as soon drink with an honest costermonger, sir, as with the greatest lord in the land. And, damme, Sir, I like him all the better for it.' With much more to the same effect, liberally spiced with his favourite oath.

Unfortunately this propensity to mix with common people, and ape their ways and speech, was only too thorough a characteristic of Tom Darrell.

Of the two, perhaps, he would rather drink with the costermonger, even without any clear knowledge as to his honesty, than with a man of his own class and education. Perhaps for the reason that with the latter he was simply an equal, whilst with the costermongers he could and did crow the loudest of any cock on the dunghill.

At the end of the month Mr Allerton told Tom that he liked him and would be damned if he did not push him on.

'What did we agree to as salary, Darrell?' asked he.

‘You offered me a hundred a year, or rather to pay me this month at the rate of a hundred a year,’ replied Tom.

‘Humph!’ said Allerton. Well,’ how do you like this work? Pretty well! Eh? You do! Then damme, sir, I’ll keep you on at it, and not only that, but I like you so well, that, damme, if I won’t fix you at a hundred and twenty pounds a year. There! What do you say to it? Eh?’

‘I’ll thank you heartily, sir,’ replied Tom, and so the affair was concluded.

Tom wrote an account of this conversation, as repeated above, to Philip, mingling with it a few sarcastic hits at him, forgetting all the while that he was actually indebted to Philip for the place in which he stood.

At the time he read this letter, Philip thought it rather odd that a master should speak in that peculiar familiar manner to one of his employés, and felt inclined to treat the whole affair as a figment of his brother’s very prolific brain. As it happened, however, having to meet this Mr Allerton on business connected with Tom, Philip immediately re-

cognized that the portrait he had received of the man was but very slightly exaggerated.

At the same time, too, after the business matter was settled, Philip was warmly invited to make one of a dinner-party at Mr Allerton's house, on the occasion of his son's coming of age ; and as it was not to take place for some days, Philip accepted the invitation, always of course with the reservation that his host would not be put out if some sudden event should cause him to disappoint him.

Tom rapidly fell into the ways and manners of his new companions, and by degrees dropped his Yankeeisms more and more, only using sufficient intonation to show that he had been in the States.

As to his billy-goat beard and hanging moustache, nothing could persuade him to get rid of them ; and, as before said, he was just as handsome with those hairy appendages as when he wore whiskers and moustache only.

Even Philip could not help loving him again, just as much as ever. Tom was so joyous, so airily serene, and had such a comfortably *insouciant* way of looking at things,

---

which, coupled with an agreeable manner, enabled him very quickly to cause all who knew him to like him.

Even those, such as Philip, who best knew what stupidities he committed, fell into the way of invariably glossing over his blunders and failings with the easy excuse,—

‘He’s *so* good-hearted, you know, that he’s easily led away, and so makes a fool of himself.’

## CHAPTER VII.

ALLEN HEYSON—ADÈLE—MAIDSTONE FRIENDS.

HOW can my gray-goose quill do proper justice to the first subject of this chapter? Those who have known him will say that my portrait is feebly drawn, and does not present the true Allen to their eyes. Perhaps the reader of this book may some day reproach me for not having chosen him, instead of Philip Darrell, for my hero. I can only urge in mitigation that it is not I who make this story, but the events of a life, or rather lives, that have fallen under my sphere of observation. And that is in truth the sole reason for my neglect of Allen.

Allen and Philip had been school-fellows in the old time at Bourville, with M. de Brenne; and many an escapade had they enjoyed together. Now they were both grown men,—for work makes boys of twenty years

into men in these busy times. They kept up the old friendship as far as their new conditions of life would allow. Philip always remembered Allen as his brave, earnest playmate, and he also never ceased to love Philip with the old school-boy devotion. Allen had once been very nearly drowned, whilst bathing in the canal at Bourville, and although his friend always persisted in saying that he had done nothing out of the common, yet Allen was firmly convinced that Philip, by his prompt assistance, had saved his life. However it was, it begot a pure feeling of gratitude in Allen Heyson's heart, that was as much an honour to himself as to Philip Darrell.

In person, Allen was short like his father, with beard and moustache hiding half his face, but not so much as to conceal the fire of his bright gray eyes, which had a slight blue tinge in their grayness. His nose was well formed, and his forehead high and open. He was strongly built and square shouldered, without being squat in figure. He had a nervous brusque way of speaking, and in consequence said little, but what he did say was

always straight to the point. He was merry and a splendid companion. Such was Allen Heyson to all the world. But there were deeper depths than the shallows of openness, loyalty, and courage, depths that few ever fathomed! For not every plumb-line could know how to reach these hidden places. To outward appearance, there was nothing singular in Allen Heyson; you might have met fifty handsomer men any time you cared to walk through a busy thoroughfare, men who were taller, stronger, and more calculated to win attention. But Allen was not to be set by the side of these. I cannot look back on classic story without comparing him somewhat to Æneas. For, like Æneas, Allen would never have hesitated to stop in order to carry his father Anchises out of a burning Troy. In fact, this was the great characteristic of Allen Heyson. To his father he stood in the reversed relation of 'Fidus Achates,' with the superaddition of an intense affection and respect, to the courage and faithfulness of the companion of Æneas.

It is somewhat difficult adequately to

translate such a character into words. There was such tenderness in Allen; such true and yet lofty ideals of duty and honour guided his daily life and every action of that life. He was so singular, as to hold that it was good to do right for nothing more than the love of right, and he based his ideas of Reverence and Worship on the creed that 'he who does his duty, glorifies God!' And in his homely, straightforward way, Allen Heyson endeavoured to do his duty.

He was infinitely susceptible to friendship, and possessed a rough, common-sense 'instinct,' so to speak, of the degree of friendship he could feel for any new acquaintance.

And now there was a deep sorrow clouding over Allen's life. Mr Heyson noticed it and grieved over it, but forbore to probe a wound that he knew must still be rankling. Poor Allen easily and soon perceived his kind father's reticence, and reproached himself sometimes for not having told him of this one secret, in as full confidence as he imparted to him the story of every other action of his life.

It is so hard to see a prize, which we held to be securely our own, suddenly snatched away by a new comer. And it was at first all the harder to bear, because the despoiler, in this instance, was the friend Allen loved most truthfully on earth.

When he saw Philip come time after time, and noted Adèle's evident pleasure at his coming, poor Allen would feel his heart quiver with inexpressible pain—pain with so much of longing in it, and complicated by so sweet a love. Sometimes he tried to hate Philip, and, for a few moments, when his pain was hardest, he could succeed in it. But the reaction soon came, bringing him back to the hard, narrow path. Very bright flowers would spring up on either side, but they allured him in vain. He seemed to know that they would soon wither once plucked, and that they had no scent, save of bitterness and woe. And the flowers on the narrow path grew very high up, and were plain and simple. But they well repaid the toil and trouble spent in climbing after them. And every time Allen Heyson conquered his passion

towards Philip, and beat down into silence the burning love he felt for Adèle, he plucked up one of these plain, simple flowers ; and he would keep it treasured up in the granary of his heart, whence its sweet perfume and soft warmth came from time to time to remind him of his duty. And in truth duty is very hard to fulfil, but once done, its fragrance is everlasting.

I can see him so clearly setting off on his long solitary walk through the fields ; his sturdy, well-knit figure ; his comely, manly face, with some deep lines, here and there, though, records of many battles bravely won ; the earnest look in his blue-gray eyes, that sometimes touch one's heart with the deep sadness expressed in them ; his beard and moustache, thick and luxuriant, but trimmed and cut with extreme care, giving his face a something of a Van Eyke look. And how well I remember the stout, broad, curved-handled walking-stick, carved quaintly with a dog's head for ornament. A man every inch of him was Allen Heyson ; as you felt at once by the cordial grasp of his hand.

At such times as these Allen did not ask his father to accompany him. His walks were the only consolation he felt now; for there only could he give himself up to full communion with his love. And he sometimes came to think, as he passed along the foot-paths through hop-gardens, and by waving corn-fields, that after all Adèle might come to love him. He felt that his own love was so great and so pure, that if once she could know of it she would learn to reciprocate it. And with the soft evening sunshine on him, and the sweet bird songs from every thicket and field, Allen would live entirely in his dream; and while the dream lasted, his pain was forgotten, his heart was lulled into deceitful rest by the magnificent harmonies of the Nature around and above him, and he would be happy. But when his footsteps touched the hard open road again, the dream would fade, and leave him face to face with the reality of his pain.

He had loved so to watch over Adèle, and note each virtue and defect of her character, with the eyes of a lover who wished to become

her husband ; and with his gentle unobstrusive influence he had moulded into good shape qualities which poor little Adèle's home-life left quite untouched, and lopped off many offending frailties that might prove injurious hereafter. For Adèle's home was hardly a fit one for so tender and impulsive a creature. Madame De Brenne was unfortunately afflicted with the taint of that terrible scourge of our land—she often drank to excess.

Allen knew this, and it was his influence, added to the mute pleading of Adèle's soft childishness, that had made her so domesticated with them.

Mr Heyson was somehow related to Madame De Brenne (in what degree I never could remember, although it has been explained to me over and over again), and perhaps this relationship furnished Madame with an easy excuse for getting rid of her daughter as much as possible, so that Adèle passed most of her time with the Heysons, and her constant companion before, and even after Philip had seen her again in their house, was Allen Heyson.

Adèle was essentially French in character, and her inborn frivolity was deepened and perpetuated by her mother's training, or rather want of training. Accustomed to have no opinion of her own, and to see and judge all things through her mother's eyes, and with her opinions, Adèle was little else than a pretty animated doll. Away from her mother she could sing and play well, and with true feeling, but as to having any opinion apart from her, that was quite another thing. Even the constant companionship of Allen and his sisters, Edith and Florrie, made but slight impressions upon this mobile character. She was one of those natures that require a strong hand to keep them in check, and great vigilance to prevent them from going astray.

But, and in this lay her great charm, Adèle was wonderfully winning and affectionate, and her immature mind gave to her every action a character of childish innocence that instantly robbed a kiss of its tender meaning, or a caress of its burning thrill. One felt that one kissed a child, or fondled a pretty little girl. Yet, somehow, by greater

knowledge of her, this feeling of half disappointment gradually made way for a feeling of love for the pure-minded creature, and an intense anxiety concerning her, which soon developed into a desire to protect and guard the life of so guileless a child from the many temptations of the world. This had been Allen's feeling, this was also Philip's. Neither could, or perhaps would, have helped it, even if they had possessed the power.

But the misery of Adèle's character was an unconscious want of fixity of purpose, of idea, or of love. She easily tired of things, and grew weary of people. She only liked the Heysons *because they were kind to her*, and not in any degree from any loving trait she discovered in their respective characters. She would have loved any other family in just the same degree, provided they were as kind and indulgent. For Allen she had a sort of affection arising from long acquaintance, but she left him immediately when Philip came, and probably never had the faintest idea that she could hurt his feelings by so doing.

Edith and her mother would very much have liked to see Adèle love Allen. They had guessed his secret before Philip Darrell had paid his third visit to Maidstone. But they had said nothing to him, had never even hinted to him that they knew anything of it.

None of the family much liked Mme De Brenne. There was something so *odd* about the good lady which repelled Mrs Heyson's sympathies, and the very look of her offended her conception of what a lady should be. Madame was always strangely slovenly in her attire, and sometimes even dirty. With many people she had gained a reputation for great learning, and immense application to study. Her inky fingers often seemed also to hint that she not only read, but wrote as well. But Mrs Heyson, who was neatness personified, was greatly disgusted at the slovenliness of this distant relation of her husband's. And on her side Madame had no great love for Mrs Heyson. She secretly feared this lady's very sharp and observant manner; she shrunk under her glance with the feeling of conscious turpitude; she felt when Mrs Heyson's sharp

eyes were scanning her from head to foot, that no disguise would avail against this personification of cleanliness and rectitude of conduct. So that the two ladies did not see much of each other, and, perhaps, wisely contented themselves with sending their mutual dear love backwards and forwards per Adèle.

Edith and Florrie have so little to do with our story, that we need only say that they were good girls — merry, jesting, playing, working, reading Cervantes or Véga, Racine or Molière, and making pies and tarts, and peeling potatoes with equal energy and gusto. They were fully worthy to be Allen's sisters. In features they were somewhat good-looking, but with the same earnest gaze that was so characteristic of their brother.

Adèle De Brenne had been some years in Maidstone, and had from the very first been intimate with them. They all loved her, but also all deplored her unfixedity of character, her utter want and ignorance of self-guidance, and an undercurrent of selfishness, which was at present hid by her childishness. They had easily found that even as a child Adèle had

been able to feel *passion*, but never to understand love. She would be passionately attached to them one day, only to leave them the next for some new favourite or new toy. And this was the basis of all the misery that overtook our friends, the people in this book. And only after terrible trials and much suffering will Adèle become a true-hearted, loving woman. Now she was fancying that Philip was very fond of her, and by an easy effort of mind she persuaded herself that she was very fond of Philip. Forgetting that she was snow as to love, and that Philip might be fire, and that snow melts soon before a moderate flame. And she was all a-glow with fancied passion, whilst Philip's brave heart was full of true honest love for her.

## CHAPTER VIII.

PHILIP AND TOM PAY A VISIT TO MAIDSTONE TOGETHER  
—PHILIP HURT BY ADELE'S FICKLENESS—ANTAGONISTIC  
AFFINITY.

ALLEN had just received a letter from Philip, telling him of Tom's arrival and quiet settling down to business at John Allerton and Co's.

'Mother,' said Allen, 'Philip wants to bring his brother down here to see you. What shall I say in reply?'

'You can't do otherwise, my dear boy, than invite Philip's brother,' called out Mr Heyson. 'I should like to see him, as I don't remember him much, except that he was a good musician.'

'Very well, father,' said Allen, 'I'll write to Philip and invite him as you wish.'

'But what kind of person is he?' asked Mrs Heyson, who noticed her son's hesitation about the invitation.

‘Who? Tom Darrell?’ said Allen.

‘Yes,’ said his mother.

‘Oh, I almost forget. I didn’t like him much at school,—he was a sneak rather, and told lies to such an extent that I often think he did it positively with a relish for falsehood. And he was always low in his tastes—liked pot-house friends and coarse people better than his own set;’ and as he finished this explanatory note to Tom Darrell, Allen walked off into the garden. Mr Heyson got up and followed him, and catching him up on the gravel walk, they went together to the little smoking-room Allen had built. It was a favourite retreat, both for the son and for his father. The still river flowed just outside the window, and carried its waters lazily along in the summer weather; and when the breeze blew among the tall reeds and sedge over against the opposite bank, the rustling that ensued from the dry, lance-like leaves was inexpressibly soothing. A pipe was doubly enjoyable in this quiet retreat, and a cigar was simply Paradise. They sat by the little table quite silently, and Allen set a pipe before his

father with a gesture characteristic of his nature. He seemed to lay the pipe before his father affectionately and respectfully. Old Heyson reached out his hand and took up a tobacco-jar in an absent sort of way, when Allen gently slid another jar, with different tobacco, in its place.

‘That’s the best, father,’ said he. His father simply nodded, and proceeded to fill his pipe. After him Allen did the same, and then both leaning their arms on the table, they looked through the window on to the river.

The morning sun shone gloriously upon it, a light breeze ruffled the water, and each ripple was like a soft gleam of gold, and the reeds rustled and waved, and the water came lap-lap against the banks of the river—a scene of tranquil beauty, with a background of blue sky and purple hills in the far distance. Allen was looking out upon it very sadly and gravely. Old Heyson glanced at him from time to time rather anxiously. At last he said, between the puffs,

‘Allen, my boy, I don’t think you’re very happy just now.’

Allen turned his face round and simply said, 'That is true; I'm not.'

His father said nothing for the next few minutes; then with a sort of effort gasped out, 'Is it about her?' and Allen answered, 'Yes.'

Then they spoke no more. All was said in these few words, and no confidence could have been better expressed than by this Spartan-like dialogue. But although they were silent they not the less held communion with each other. In a cough, or a glance, or a nod of the head, they told each other all that could be said.

Presently Allen threw up the window, and the warm sunlit air came in, laden with fragrance and carrying with it the hum of countless insects on the river. But Allen and his father were not in the least disturbed by this sudden irruption of life into their calm, for it rendered their double isolation more complete; it made them stand together, communing quite apart from the busy life of Nature. They enjoyed their silence, and enjoyed it the more that they loved so truly and well, and reposed such trust in each other that they had no

need of words to convey what they wished to communicate. In the silence they were always speaking without ever uttering a word. So they sat together, smoking and looking out upon the river for fully an hour. Then Mr Heyson got up and went to Allen and, laying his hand gently on his boy's shoulder, said :

‘Don't be down-hearted, boy ; it will all come right in the end.’

Allen looked up, their eyes met, and untold wealth of love passed in the brief glance. The father's voice was inexpressibly sweet and tender as he bade his son not despair. Then Mr Heyson turned away, muttering to himself, and as his father quitted the little place Allen's eyes were full of happy tears.

Who would not envy him the emotion that had caused them to flow ?

During the day Allen wrote to Philip and invited him to bring Tom the next time he paid them a visit. As the following Sunday was Philip's by the right of ancient prescription, Tom met him at London Bridge, and together they set off for Maidstone.

Tom Darrell would hardly be recognized

by the readers to whom he was presented in the early part of this book. He now had good clothes that fitted him and showed off his tall stature to advantage. The sunburn had left his face and hands, and his clear complexion showed very well against his dark moustache and *Impériale*. Poor Philip looked somewhat mean by his side. Tom had brown eyes, but with a totally different expression from that in Philip's, and the corners of his mouth were always expanded into a sneer. His upper lip was thin and the lower thick in proportion, giving his mouth a peculiar appearance; his thick moustache helped to conceal, and indeed did conceal, most of the expression of sneering. The eyes were cold and glittering, with something that reminded one of the brilliancy of a snake's eyes, occasionally when seen in repose they had the same deadly look. But few people ever noticed this; usually Tom's eyes were full of bold merriment; a jest from his lips brought a corresponding flash from his eyes that doubled the drollery of the joke, or intensified the venom and bitterness of the sarcasm. Altogether, as Philip and he walked

up and down the platform before the train started, many people audibly remarked on Tom's gentlemanly bearing, and wondered at Philip's awkwardness and ill-fitting dress. When they got out of the train at Maidstone they found Allen waiting for them with his trap. He shook hands rather coldly with Tom, which, however, Tom paid no attention to, and soon they were in the trap, and the pony took them quickly on to the Woodlands.

Adèle was standing by the gate as they drove up, and Philip jumped down first and came to kiss her ; but as Tom was there Adèle pretended to be shy and ran away into the house. This was the first disappointment of that eventful day. Edith and Florrie came out to meet them, and Philip introduced Tom to them. They seemed quite struck with his appearance. Mr Heyson and his wife welcomed him pretty cordially, and Tom soon made himself at home and greatly ingratiated himself with Mr Heyson. In fact, before he had been in the house for the space of an hour, he had won upon all present, excepting Allen. Allen remembered the old adage that

'the boy makes the man,' and with a vivid recollection of Bourville school-days, he felt a great distrust of his quondam playmate. So he set himself to watch Tom Darrell's lips, and very soon convinced himself that he was false in all he did or spoke. The eyes very often contradicted what the lips said or smiled, and Allen felt sure that when a man shows that power over a certain feature, it can nearly always be looked upon as a mark of duplicity.

Whether wrong or right, that was the impression made upon Allen by Tom Darrell. Once only he caught the deadly, snake-like expression of the eyes. Tom was looking at Adèle and Philip, talking fondly as lovers will, and Allen was actually startled by the thoughts that thronged to his brain at the sight of that serpent-like gaze. The very moment Allen noticed him Tom turned his eyes away, *feeling*, with a strange magnetic instinct, that some one was watching him; and although Allen watched during the whole of the day for that look to come again, he looked in vain. Everybody but Allen seemed pleased with Tom. His rich melodious voice, the intonation he had

brought from America, drawing attention to him whenever he spoke his wild merry anecdotes, tinged with a light sarcasm on the subjects of the stories he told, that caused every one to hear and laugh. He flattered Mrs Heyson in the most delicate manner; his attitude to Mr Heyson was deferring and full of a subtle charm; the girls were pleased with him for his fine form and handsome features, and the skilful and just compliments he paid them. But more than any one, Adèle seemed taken with him. She left Philip pretty much to his own resources, greatly to this latter's disgust, and devoted herself to a distinct flirtation with Tom. Philip looked on in utter astonishment; it was quite a new character for Adèle to adopt, towards him, at all events.

Allen saw the deep chagrin of his friend, and enticed him into a game of chess and a pipe in the workhouse to get him out of the way, for he could guess that Philip's anger would soon show itself, and then there would, in all probability, be a 'scene.' To him this spectacle was nothing new. He had seen Adèle play this trick so often, and always

with such evident relish, that he had sometimes asked himself whether she really flirted purposely, or did not actually know that she was flirting. He had not yet solved this question to his liking. And, indeed, although he did not show it, Allen was quite as much annoyed as Philip was. Certainly Tom had been at school at Bourville just as really as he and Philip, and so could claim the title of old playmate too. Allen could not help loving Adèle with all the strength of his earnest character, and with such a love as could not be plucked out of the heart without tearing it asunder; and he groaned inwardly to see her so ready to jest and flirt with the man to whom he felt an invincible antipathy.

At dinner-time Adèle insisted on having a place next to Tom, and as her request could not be refused without it seeming churlish towards the guest of the day, she obtained her wish.

Poor Philip. The game of chess and the pipe he had had with Allen Heyson had somewhat dispelled the cloud of the morning, but when he saw it all repeated again at dinner-time he was really amazed and hurt. He

could not understand it. How, indeed, could he? He had imagined that Adèle loved him—and perhaps in her passionate, childish way she did. She used always to like to sit on Philip's knees and have his arm round her waist; and there was nothing Philip loved so well as to feel her warm breath on his cheek and her soft wavy hair touch his face. She only laughed and chatted with Tom, but in such a madcap way that Philip began to feel gravely displeased.

To Allen, strangely enough, this conduct of Adèle's brought a gleam of hope. If she could leave Philip in such utter loneliness—Philip, of whom she had always seemed so fond, might she not also come back to him, Allen, whom she had known so long. He fought against the feeling, but could not beat it down—like Briareus, it sprang up again from his heart with fresh strength. So after a little while he gave over trying to conquer it, but let it seize upon him to the full; and for a short time Allen was, as it were, intoxicated with the dreamy hopes that came thronging up from his heart. *He* knew Adèle's fickle

temper so well, yet fell into the snare the blind god laid for him. It was so sweet to feel such unwonted pleasure.

The joy in his face caught Adèle's attention, and she came up to him with a loving smile and childish words that seemed to convey to him some splendid hope. She even tugged at his beard, and that as much as her smiles caused him exquisite pleasure. For it was what she used to delight in when there had been no one to come between them.

But he shuddered after that each time, when he looked at Tom Darrell, so handsome, so witty, so engaging, and with such ready command of words to express a compliment or a delicate touch of flattery. As often as Tom came between the light and him, Allen felt a peculiar cold shudder steal over him. His very soul seemed to try to leap forth, and fastening upon that of Tom Darrell, have a glorious battle as to who should win Adèle. That at least was the first sensation.

Presently the current of his ideas was changed, and a vague longing came over him to be possessed of some *Ægis* which he might

extend over Adèle, so as to protect her from Tom Darrell. This feeling of antagonistic affinity—I can give it no better name—became stronger the longer Tom stayed. Allen could not understand why he should suddenly begin to hate Tom Darrell; he never had liked him, but that was no reason or explanation for the hatred that had sprung up in his heart. He seemed to be desirous to be rid of Tom Darrell, to have him sent away out of England, and forbidden ever to return. He became filled with a vague horror, that in Tom Darrell's propinquity to Adèle there was terrible danger—danger to her, and danger to him, Allen. No one can properly reproduce the feelings that agitated him all the afternoon. His love fed itself with hopes and dreams of a happy future, when he and Adèle, released from all mortal trammels, should be as one. Dreams indeed were these, for the evening itself did not pass without all these brave hopes, these earnest longings, being dashed to the ground. But still there will remain the distrust of Tom Darrell, and the pure love, hidden deep and buried under

masses of feigned indifference, that shall only be a cloak to vigilant care and pure-souled watchfulness.

In Allen Heyson Adèle De Brenne will have a guardian more faithful than any fabled Cerberus, one who will not hesitate to give all, even his life, for his love; and who will be content to do it without any further hope of reward than that of making her happy.

## CHAPTER IX.

PHILIP'S ANGER—A SUDDEN LIGHT BREAKS IN UPON ADELÈ'S  
MIND—THE 'SONATE PATHÉTIQUE'—A SUDDEN CHANGE  
—SWEET CARESSES—POOR ALLEN.

TOM flirted and joked with Adèle and the Heyson girls all the afternoon. He was full of witty sarcasm and bitterness, occasionally of irony. Mr Heyson took a sudden dislike to him for his flippant remarks anent the seriousness of life. 'Bah!' Tom had exclaimed; 'the seriousness of life is all a joke. Life itself is a jest, and man the sport that jest bandies about.' He would not understand that there was something of more consequence in life than mere pleasure-seeking. He proclaimed himself an Epicurean, and was bitterly savage that any other creed could be tolerated by men of sense. Mr Heyson listened to his tirade for a few minutes, heard him attack all he cherished most, and turned away with a marked expression of dis-

gust upon his face. Adèle had laughed and applauded Tom's witty attack on duty, morality, and all the finer instincts of man. She had applauded as a child might, who hears pretty sounds without quite understanding them. Philip had uttered an exclamation of impatience, and was about to make some angry remark, when Allen seized his arm and drew him away, bidding him not make a fool of himself. Tom noticed the angry expression on his brother's face, but only laughed with loud voice at the sight. Suddenly Philip took his arm from Allen's, and turning round, strode swiftly up to where Tom was standing with the girls, took him quickly by the arm, and led him aside.

'Tom!' cried he, 'you are driving me half mad by her flirtation!'

'Her flirtation!' laughed Tom. 'What do you mean?'

'I mean Adèle. I love her—God knows how much; and you are taking her from me!' Philip was trembling with suppressed passion. Tom looked at him with an amused smile.

'Pooh, I must enjoy myself!' he answered,

and turning on his heel, went back to the party.

Philip clenched his hands and made a step forward as if to seize hold of his brother, but suddenly stopped and walked away under the fruit-trees. He dared not stay near lest his passion should over-master him, and he knew he should make some disturbance.

Adèle, however, had noticed this movement, and felt perhaps some compunction at her unkind treatment of Philip. He had always been so tender and loving towards her that it was perhaps natural even for Adèle to feel this.

But some funny anecdote from Tom made her laugh, and for the moment she forgot all about poor Philip and his anger. Tom was more than ever funny, as if to show that nothing could ruffle him—a spirit of wild devilishness had come to him, and although he was always very fond of Philip, yet for the life of him he could not keep from flirting with Adèle. If Philip had spoken to him about her before he brought him to Maidstone, it is very probable he would have said nothing

at all to her beyond usual civilities. But for Philip to suddenly step in and almost order him—for his manner had been very imperious—to cease his amusement, was too much for Tom to submit to. Besides, it looked as if Philip was trying ‘to come the elder brother over him,’ and accordingly Tom resented his tardy interference by flirting more than ever.

Presently, however, there came a lull in the merriment, and Adèle suddenly became quite grave and serious. She had caught sight of Philip walking sadly up and down the garden, and it made her think of the fact that it was on her account that he was so upset. Consequently Tom’s further jesting elicited nothing more than a smile from her.

Allen noticed the fresh change, from gay to grave, with a feeling of intense restlessness. He could hardly keep still, and longed to have a good talk and an explanation with her. In fact, he resolved that he would seek some opportunity the very next day to declare his passion. And the resolution made him turn from hot to cold, as if in a fever; for it brought before him his slender hopes, and the full and

miserable experience he had of Adèle's fickleness. It made him doubt everything he had to recommend him. His brave loyal spirit somewhat recoiled, also, from trying to forestall Philip. He had seen that Adèle seemed more constantly fond of Philip; and he remembered that she had never before left him as she did to-day, without hardly speaking to him. Yet Allen could not stifle the mad hopes that had come to him so suddenly. And, perhaps, after all, his scruples were hardly natural. What would any other man have done in his place? Why, simply have ceased to invite Philip to his house, and have prosecuted, in his absence, his own suit with every chance in his favour. But strangely enough, no such idea had ever entered into Allen Heyson's mind. He was so simple-hearted, that no such complex plot could evolve itself within him. His nature was thoroughly opposed to anything in the way of duplicity. For himself he was always only too ready to be diffident and unassuming. It was only when his love or respect for others required him to be up and doing, that Allen

could be prompt in thought, and vigorous in action. He was less learned, or had read less than Philip, and did not possess all Philip's rare charm of thought, or delicate play of fancy. And perhaps Philip in his hard battle with the world had lost some of the true loyalty that so characterized Allen. Otherwise the two friends were much alike. Both were quiet in advocating their own claims, and preferred far more to be passed unnoticed in the crowd, than to attract attention.

The glorious weather tempted the party to take a walk across the fields, and in the hop-gardens. And even in this Adèle kept to her fresh *rôle*. She would walk with Tom, only calling out to Philip to come with them ; but he surlily refused, and stayed with Mr Heyson. These two always got on famously together, for they were much of the same way of thinking. Philip had read very deeply books into which the generality of men do not care much to dive. He knew almost by heart Voltaire's works, more especially his 'Facéties,' his 'Romans,' and his 'Philosophical Dialogues.' And he loved to dwell upon, and read and

study time after time, Rousseau's 'Profession de Foi du Vicaire Savoyard.' He was filled with the pure Deism of Rousseau, and the sceptical disregard of modern religion, embodied in 'Jean Marie Arouet.' And he and Mr Heyson had many a long conversation on political subjects. Mr Heyson was getting old, and had lost the ardour of his young days, and he delighted in listening to Philip's outbursts of enthusiasm. Philip translated the old motto, 'Liberty, Fraternity, Equality,' as every liberal Englishman understands it. Individual liberty, power of free movement, free combination, free thought, and free speech were the themes on which he would dilate and be eloquent. Old Heyson would listen with a smile of kindly sympathy and interest as Philip poured out his enthusiastic wishes for the federation of mankind into one great family of brother workmen. Philip was sanguine in his hopes that a day would come when all mankind should have equality of rights and duties. Mr Heyson would laughingly tell him, that no one but a republican could hold such hopes, and Philip would

proudly acknowledge the designation as a just one.

When the party returned from their walk, Philip had just finished one of his enthusiastic outbursts. His face was glorified by his fervour, and there yet looked out from his eyes the splendour of the noble thoughts he had uttered. Adèle was so attracted by this brave look, and so sorry perhaps for her light unkindness, that she ran up to him, and clasped him round the neck and kissed him; then insisted upon occupying her old place on his knees. And for Philip, all the bitterness of the day was driven away. He was supremely happy with Adèle, and felt glad that music was proposed for after tea.

The tea was soon over, and then Philip again fell from his height. Tom sang, and every one was enraptured with his magnificent baritone voice. In America he had taken lessons from an eminent master, and consequently knew thoroughly how to use it. By a strange coincidence he sang the Erl-king, the song that Philip used to sing. Adèle was sitting by Philip when Tom began.

After a minute she rose and went near to the piano, and turned over the leaves at the right place and moment. Then, when the song was finished, she asked him to sing again.

Philip remembered that she had not asked *him* to sing again, forgetting also how pleased she always had been to hear him sing, and to sit by the piano in quiet enjoyment as long as he had continued singing.

Well, Tom sang again, and after that Philip was entreated to take his place. For a time he refused, and when, at last, he consented, he sat down feeling vexed and troubled, consequently he sang execrably, and got up without being asked to sing again; and instead of the enthusiastic applause Tom had received, Philip could hardly hear the muttered thanks that greeted him.

After that Adèle played and sang, and Tom turned over the leaves. For Philip the evening was quite spoilt, and it was only in a vague dreamy kind of way that he listened to Adèle's clear sweet voice; and when she left the piano, he could hear everybody thanking her, and Tom praising her style and voice, but

he himself remained silent and downcast. Presently Edith sat down to the piano, and slowly such pure harmonies came floating on the air that they penetrated the coat of mail of sadness that had enclosed Philip's heart, and unconsciously big tears came trickling down his face, and then he looked up, met Adèle's eyes sadly fixed on his, and half-involuntarily he held out his arms. In an instant Adèle was nestling in them, kissing his lips, his cheeks, and eyes, he kissing back and straining her hard to his breast.

All the day's mortification was forgotten, only a sweet feeling of infinite joy flooded his whole being. Adèle felt for him, Adèle was near him, Adèle loved him! She was astonished and frightened at his frantic kisses; she did not understand her own feelings. She had seen Philip, her old playmate, sad and weary-looking, and when she saw the tears on his face, a big lump had risen in her throat, then as he opened his arms to her, with a strange yearning look in his eyes, an irresistible impulse had forced her to him.

A sudden crash of chords, a rustling of

dress, a door closing, woke them from their rapture, and when they looked up, the room was empty of all but themselves.

Adèle took Philip's head between her two hands, gazed for a moment straight into his deep brown eyes, and bending forward pressed her lips to his in a long sweet kiss, saying as she drew her lips away,

‘Tu es à moi seule, mon Philippe!’

Then she got up from his knees, threw back her wavy hair, and taking his hand in hers, they two walked straight into the garden.

Philip said never a word, only kept a tight clasp of her hand, his eyes wet with happy tears, his lips still moist from her loving kiss.

\* \* \* \* \*

They found their friends talking quietly, as they promenaded the wide gravel-walk by the plum-trees. No one took any extra notice of them as they joined the group; but after a few moments Adèle had got close to Mrs Heyson, and seemed to nestle to the brave kind woman as she might to a mother.

Then Allen dropped behind to where Philip was walking alone.

Without a word he extended his hand to his friend, looked once straight into his eyes, saw the glistening happy tears, and with a deep sigh pressed his hand with a hard grip—then suddenly flinging it from him, strode away under the fruit trees, crunching the gravel as he walked. And only thus did Philip suspect that Allen Heyson loved Adèle. Gradually they mixed and talked with the others as before, and as time passed quickly, the hour for their departure came only too soon. Tom bade good-bye to Mr and Mrs Heyson, Florry and Edith. Adèle, as she bade him good-bye, shook his hands gravely and quietly. Philip, after bidding all farewell, looked round for Allen, but could not see him. Tom went first, and Philip and Adèle walked together to the gate. They shook hands, and Adèle offered her face to Philip to kiss. One more hand-shake, then Philip walked out into the road, and turned briskly off to the right towards the station. A few steps further he was hailed by a voice that sounded

familiar to him. He looked up and saw Allen with his pony-carriage. Tom was on the back seat, so Philip sat down by Allen's side, and without a word Allen drove swiftly to the station.

As Philip jumped down, he felt a hand placed on his shoulder, turned round, and met Allen's look. His face was rough and harsh, and his eyes red with tears, but with an evident effort he held out his hand to say good-bye. Philip grasped it, with a feeling of pity for him, and said—

‘I hope we shall always be friends, Allen?’

‘I hope so too!’ replied he; then turned and drove away without another word.

Tom and Philip said few words to each other as the train rolled on with them to the Metropolis. Once arrived they simply shook hands and cordially bade each other good-night, and each went on his way. Thinking all the time of Adèle, Philip's eyes looked as if he had been crying as he walked into the dining-room, where the Renhards usually sat on Sunday night.

To their inquiries as to how he had passed

the day, he replied with an odd laugh that he had enjoyed it very much—then proceeded to make so strange an observation on the state of the weather, asserting that it was quite a cold night, when everybody knew the thermometer stood at 60°, that they all looked closely at him, and as they went up to bed remarked to each other that ‘Phil was really very peculiar.’ So he was! There was much still of the child in Philip. He laughed easily and loudly; he cried over the merest touch of pathos. No wonder that people who saw him in these moods were astonished to hear others speak of Philip Darrell’s acute, polished mind, and deep, philosophical vein of thought. They only knew him as an awkward, homely-featured, save for his eyes and brow, peculiar sort of fellow, very hard-working and persevering, and hardly ever otherwise than good-humoured and ready for any amount of mental or physical work.

Truly was our Philip a queer fellow—quite as much a puzzle to himself as a mystery to his friends, or now and then, it must be confessed, an object of ridicule to his enemies.

However, soon after he got in that night, he took his candle and walked off to bed, to pass the night in fantastic dreams of strange modes of acquiring wealth, all of which were directed to the one end of enabling him to marry Adèle De Brenne.

Can it be wondered that he woke next morning but slightly refreshed by his night's rest, and with an uneasy sort of feeling that he would much rather sit still than do any work that day? His breakfast coffee soon dispelled this lazy state of body and mind, and after his second cup Philip felt all right again, ready to undertake and finish anything 'right off the reel.' Certainly a far more satisfactory state of mind than the preceding one, and more calculated to set him dispensing mixtures, pills, and ointments with the proper degree of neatness, quickness, and accuracy, demanded by so important and responsible a task.

## CHAPTER X.

A VERY PRACTICAL CHAPTER, DETAILING A MOTHER'S ANXIOUS EFFORTS FOR HER DAUGHTER'S WELFARE; AND SHOWING HOW PHILIP VISITED MME DE BRENNE AT HER OWN INVITATION, AND WHAT HAPPENED DURING HIS VISIT.

IT is not to be supposed for a moment that Adèle De Brenne could or would conceal from her mother the abrupt and startling manner in which Philip had wooed her.

As she walked home that night with Allen Heyson, whom, unfortunately, she had always regarded as a brother, rather than simply as a friend, she could not help pondering deeply upon the quick and sudden knowledge she had obtained of Philip's love for her.

Consequently she walked slowly and silently by poor Allen's side; he, after a vain attempt at conversation, had been as silent as she, and only at the door, as he bade her good-

night, did he venture to intimate to her how much he had felt her reticence of manner. Then he could only find heart to say to her—

‘You are too happy, Adèle, to-night to have cared to speak to me!’ and without replying to her suddenly thought of invitation to walk in to see Mme De Brenne, he turned round and went rapidly away.

Somewhat surprised at his strange conduct, Adèle stood for a moment watching his swiftly receding figure, then she went in.

Mme De Brenne was seated in her big easy-chair, her feet snugly fixed on a high foot-stool, and a big book open on her knees. She looked up as Adèle came in, but turned again to her reading. Adèle put her arms round her mother’s neck and kissed her. As she did so, Mme De Brenne felt her tremble—and looking up again, saw big tears gathering in her eyes.

‘Qu’as-tu, petite?’ said she.

Adèle answered by throwing her bonnet carelessly on the table, and kneeling by her mother, put her head into the lap she had

often slept in, and gave vent to a burst of tears.

‘Are you ill, my dear?’ said her mother.

‘Oh! non! Mère!’

‘Eh! bien donc! pourquoi pleures-tu?’

‘D’être trop heureuse!’ said Adèle.

‘That, my child, is impossible,’ rejoined Mme De Brenne. ‘One can never be too happy in this world.’

‘Philip loves me, Mère! He kissed me to-night,’ said Adèle, lifting her flushed face to her mother’s.

‘And who, pray, is Philip?’ asked Mme De Brenne, disagreeably surprised to find that anybody should have the audacity to engage her child’s affections, without first asking her, Mme De Brenne’s, permission to do so.

‘Don’t you remember Philip Darrell, at Bourville, who was five years with us?’

‘Yes, yes! Philip Darrell! Certainly I remember him. But he must be very young yet to be making love to people. What is he?’

‘Oh, I believe he is a doctor, Maman; or,

at any rate, he is going to be one,' replied Adèle.

'And do you know what his income is? I suppose not, as your knowledge, even of what he is, only extends so far as to believe he is a doctor, or is going to be one! Do you know even where he lives?' said the Maman.

'Of course I do; he has often written to me,' replied Adèle.

'Written to you, and made love to you, and kissed you, and all without my sanction! Mais c'est absolument terrible!' cried Mme De Brenne. All her ideas of propriety were so thoroughly upset by the audacity of these young folks, who had dared actually to fall in love with each other without telling her, the mother of the girl, one single word about it.

So thoroughly had Mme De Brenne become imbued with the French notions of *convenance* and the methodical style of their asking and giving in marriage, that, notwithstanding her English birth, the good lady was really deeply grieved as well as shocked by what she conceived to be the duplicity of her child.

A perfect recluse, in so far as her spare time can be reckoned, Mme De Brenne had paid so few visits to her old friends in Maidstone, was always so deeply buried in French classics and the novel writers of the '*approved by the Bishop*' style of work, that the broad English views of what the life of young people should be never reached her, or if she occasionally noticed among her pupils a restlessness and waywardness inexplicable by any of her French rules of conduct, she simply put it down to some defect of mind, rather than to the true cause.

In the little town of French Flanders where she had spent so many years of her life, she had been always appealed to as a kind of authority upon questions of propriety and the befitting conduct of the young. Everybody knew everybody else in Bourville, in fact it might be said that the relation of at least 'cousin-ship' existed between all its inhabitants, consequently any rumour of approaching nuptials created quite a stir in the community.

Perhaps Madame's anger will be better understood when it has been explained to the

English reader how such matters are managed in France.

For instance, I remember a case in point, which occurred during my stay in Bourville, and it will not be out of place to relate it here, as it will tend to explain Mme De Brenne's anger.

A Norman gentleman, Monsieur de la Courteraye, who was connected with little Bourville by family relationship to some of its inhabitants, having attained that *certain* age at which Frenchmen begin to think they ought to settle down, bethought him that he would like to be married, as his Norman château looked rather desolate without some lady to enliven it by her presence. As his female friends were only of that *genre* from which he could not select a *wife*, he determined to ask his family friends at Bourville to look up among their acquaintance some young lady, *aimable, de bonnes mœurs, et avec une jolie dot!*

Accordingly he wrote to his cousin Alphonse Brelle and asked him to undertake this little affair for him, as he knew his style.

His friend took three hours to reflect upon the choice he should make, then sat down and wrote word to la Courteraye that if he would pay Bourville a short visit he would indicate to him the chosen one.

In three days the suitor arrived, and went the evening of his arrival with his cousin to a *soirée*, at the house of a mutual friend. There Alphonse Brelle pointed out to him the young lady whom he thought likely to suit him. After a few moments scrutiny, he asked to be presented to her.

The *demoiselle*, who perhaps divined the suitor, put forth all her little graces of manner and piquancy of conversation. La Courteraye was charmed beyond measure. That evening, as they walked home to Brelle's residence in the Rue des Capucins, he said just these words, 'Cette demoiselle me convient,' and from that moment said nothing more about the matter, excepting an inquiry concerning the dower she would have.

M. de la Courteraye stayed three days in Bourville and saw his 'future' twice after the first visit. Then he went back to Normandy

and wrote to the parents of the *demoiselle*, stating his position, and asking their permission to pay his attentions to their daughter. For further particulars as to his character, his *mœurs*, and his position, he referred them to his friend and 'parent' M. Alphonse Brelle.

The parents made the necessary inquiries, were satisfied as to M. de la Courteraye's position, and answered his letter by assuring him that they would be pleased to accept him as their *gendre*, after the very flattering *renseignements* M. Brelle had given them. So that M. de la Courteraye paid another visit to Bourville shortly after the receipt of their letter, stayed two weeks, saw his *fiancée* every day during that time; was never *once alone* with her, for that would have been quite against *les convenances*, and at the expiration of his fortnight went back again to Normandy, to reflect for a short time upon Mademoiselle's character.

Three months after this the banns were published, and simultaneously in Normandy and in French Flanders, on the walls of the *hôtels de ville* in their respective parishes,

the notices of their approaching marriage were pasted up. Then, the legal period of delay having expired, the happy pair being first legally married at the *Mairie*, consummated their felicity by going through the ceremony of the Church marriage afterwards.

As soon as the *déjeuner* was over, away both went to spend their *lune de miel* in Paris.

From accounts I have since received of them, they appear to suit each other very well, and, altogether to make a very happy *ménage*. Probably their *savoir-faire* will enable them to endure each other until they begin to love as married folks should do.

I have narrated the above anecdote *in extenso* because in no other way can the peculiarity of French marriages be understood. And it was on this account that Mme De Brenne felt, although she did not express it, so much anger.

Soon after her supper—for she usually took a little snack just before Adèle went to bed—she sat down to her *secrétaire*, and wrote a long letter to Mr Philip Darrell, demanding a full and minute explanation of his recent

conduct, and requiring him to send her a true account of his position and prospects, if he had any ; and forbidding him to continue his attentions to her daughter until he had made the required explanations.

The next morning she asked Adèle for Philip's address, and as she went to her private lessons of music, French, and singing, she posted the portentous epistle.

Philip received it early on Tuesday morning, and recognizing the post-mark, and, as he fancied, the hand-writing, which certainly very much resembled Adèle's, he tore open the letter with the greatest eagerness ; but when he had read the first few lines, he sat down and laughed ! (Though I blush for his conduct I must chronicle it truthfully.) Positively he laughed ! and the more he read, the more his merriment increased. What there was in the letter so to excite his risible faculties I cannot say, as I never saw the epistle in question, and only learnt the general import of its contents as given above.

However, after reading the letter over once or twice again very carefully, he decided to

write forthwith to Mme De Brenne. Fortunately he kept a copy, so that it is inserted here in its proper place. It ran thus—

10, — *Square, London,*

*September 8th, 185 .*

‘ MY DEAR MADAME,

‘ I HAVE to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 6th inst., and after careful and due consideration send you this in answer. You wish to know what my position and my prospects are, before you can allow me to continue my attentions to your daughter. Therefore I must tell you, first, that I occupy with Doctor Renhard the position of medical assistant, at a salary of one hundred and five guineas per annum; my savings (*épargnes*) amount to about £470, part of that amount, however, being a small legacy of £250 from a maternal relation. That is my position.

‘ As to my prospects : I have matriculated at the London University, and shall soon have completed my curriculum of medical education, when I hope to pass the examinations necessary to obtain a degree in Surgery and Midwifery. That once attained, I shall pur-

chase a partnership in some practice, and from that time hope to make my way in the world.

‘In conclusion, allow me to remind you that when at school with M. De Brenne, at Bourville, he was always so kind and good to me as to justify the conviction I have that he loved me as a father might.

‘With sincere regards to you and to Adèle,

‘I remain, yours very truly,

‘PHILIP DARRELL.’

‘MME DE BRENNE,

‘*London Road, Maidstone.*’

No sooner had he written this than he set off to the Post, and as the letter fell down the slit for its reception, a great load seemed lifted from his heart.

Three days passed without any answer from Mme De Brenne. On the fourth Philip received a letter from Mrs Heyson, informing him that Madame had left her seclusion, and paid them a visit for the express purpose of having a long conversation about him.

The same post brought a letter to Doctor

Renhard from Mme De Brenne, asking, in a cautious manner, for his opinion of Mr Philip Darrell. The Doctor showed this to Philip, and asked him what it was about. When he was told, he could not help laughing; but readily answered the inquiries by a careful and kind letter, in which he expressed his very high opinion of Philip's manners, morals, and talents; finishing with an eulogistic account of the brave way in which he had met the disasters that had overtaken his family.

After this, another two days passed, then came a long, loving letter from Adèle, enclosing one from her mother, authorizing Philip to woo, and win if he could, her amiable daughter; but making it a *sine quâ non* that he should pay his next visit to her, in the London Road. Anybody would tell him where Ailsey Villa was.

This last piece of information was quite superfluous, for Philip was perfectly *au fait* as to the whereabouts of Ailsey Villa; in fact, he was quite an adept at opening the front garden-gate, notwithstanding its peculiar latch, and that he had only done it a few times.

So that the next time he was able to get away from work, he took train for Maidstone, and presented himself for inspection at Ailsey Villa. Be it noted that he did not ask Tom to go with him this time.

Mme De Brenne rose to greet him with a dignified French *révérence*. Philip offered his hand, and as she took it, he broke through the ice of her lingering anger by kissing her heartily on both cheeks.

‘Mais! Par exemple!’ exclaimed Madame, as she sank back, smiling, into her arm-chair.

‘Un exemple,’ cried Adèle, ‘que je vais suivre tout de suite,’ and accordingly did so, her mother catching her and returning the salutes with interest.

‘How much you are altered, Philip,’ said Madame, as soon as she was freed from her child’s embrace.

‘But you are not changed a bit, Madame,’ cried Philip; ‘why, you look the same as when I said good-bye to you nearly nine years ago.’

‘Adèle, donne-lui une bonne tape pour cette flatterie,’ said Madame, inwardly pleased

with the compliment, but pretending not to accept it even.

Adèle accordingly rapped Philip's knuckles, which he resented, and punished by seizing her hand, and drawing her near to him ; after which he put his arm round her waist.

The mother looked at them with a kind smile on her face, and, as Philip's grave, open features, reflecting the happiness he felt, were uplifted to Adèle, had good opportunity to scrutinize him. She flattered herself upon her knowledge of physiognomy, having diligently studied Lavater's theories in her recent reading ; and as she gazed, with all a mother's sagacity of penetration, and the experience of years and careful study, at the face before her, she felt at once that with Philip her daughter would be safe, and, when married, might be happy if she chose.

The broad brow, evidencing brain-power ; the clear, deep-brown eyes, luminous and brilliant, and expressing in their flashing glance the proud high feeling of honour that Philip possessed so fully ; the decided curves of the mouth, and the square chin, giving

promise of determination and true perseverance. The mobile nostrils, as she could easily see, would corroborate a flash of anger from the eyes, by their quivering movement.

Suddenly she got up from her chair, and with a word of excuse to her children, as she called them, she went out of the room, thus leaving the two together, and giving the highest proof of her confidence in Philip's truth, that it were possible for one of her French training to give.

As a natural consequence, perhaps, of this trust, Adèle and Philip talked quietly and soberly for the short time that Mme De Brenne was absent; when she returned, Adèle took the place she had so often coveted as a child, namely, on Philip's knees, and naturally enough her arm stole round his neck, and his arm soon clasped her waist.

For a few moments Mme De Brenne stood silently looking at the two; then, still without speaking, she stepped up to them, and presenting her cheek to Philip, said, as he bent down, 'Embrasse-moi, qui serai bientôt la mère.'

Much astonished, Philip nevertheless obeyed her instantly, and with a good grace. Then Mme De Brenne astonished him still more by adding—

‘Embrasse Adèle aussi, devant moi.’

Philip obeyed this second command with no less alacrity than the first.

Madame then seemed satisfied, and sat herself in the big easy-chair. After a while she began to catechize Philip in the most searching manner, proposing such strange questions in Morals, in Religion, in Philosophy, and finally in the mysterious subject of Domestic Science; making towards the end of her discourse the most marvellous medley of her questions that could possibly be imagined.

Philip soon became bewildered and lost, endeavouring to frame a suitable answer to a question, which, beginning with a query as to his idea of pure morality, gradually worked itself into a proposition involving his knowledge of the construction of fire-grates! For fully an hour did Madame hold this unsatisfactory examination of her future son-in-law; then, in the midst of one of his answers to

her last composite question, she suddenly got up, and walked out of the room. Most thoroughly puzzled, Philip looked to Adèle for an explanation of Madame's strange conduct. The poor girl's eyes were brimming with tears, and when Philip asked her what was the matter with Mme De Brenne, she hid her face on his shoulder and cried aloud. Between her sobs she could only say.—

‘Maman est souvent malade le Dimanche, et alors elle est si drôle.’

‘But why should you cry about it, dear?’ said Philip. ‘I don’t see how you can prevent it!’

‘I have tried many a time,’ cried Adèle, ‘all to no good. Mamma always does it again the next Sunday!’

‘Does it again!’ thought Philip, more thoroughly mystified than ever as to what ailed Mme De Brenne.

Seeing, however, how much the subject seemed to afflict poor little Adèle, he said no more on that topic, but began chatting and talking about his recent medical experiences; and she soon laughed as he analyzed, for her

amusement, the eccentricities of one of Doctor Renhard's patients, who was said to be so frightened of hydrophobia, that he one day came rushing along to the Doctor's in his shirt-sleeves, carrying his coat in his hand; and after a thundering knock at the door, flew into the consulting-room, and throwing his coat on the table before the Doctor, pointed with his finger to the hairy evidences of a cat having been on it.

'The cat, Doctor! the cat! Ah! It—it slept on *my* coat! Do you think that might give me hydrophobia?'

'My dear sir, pray be calm! Allow me to explain to you the nature of hydrophobia, &c., &c. ;' and after a long argument the Doctor managed to tranquillize him; but still the patient insisted on shaking his coat for at least ten minutes, and giving it a good brushing.

As soon as Philip had managed to make Adèle laugh again, he proposed that they should adjourn to the garden, or take a little walk before dinner.

Adèle agreed joyfully, and ran out to tell

her mother, and put on her hat. She soon returned equipped, with a shade on her face, either from the shadow thrown by the brim of her straw hat, or from having seen her mother again.

Philip did not ask her about it, and as soon as they were out, he talked so merrily, and said such mad, nonsensical things, that Adèle had great difficulty in not laughing out loud in the street. She was quite cheerful and light-hearted as they turned back from the meadow at the end of the footpath, and declared she had a famous appetite.

Soon afterwards dinner was served, and Madame came into the room and took her place at the head of the little table.

Philip could hardly help showing his surprise when he looked at the table, for the things were put on it anyhow; the knives and forks were not over clean, and seemed to be choosing different paths, for they stood almost at right angles to each other. The cloth was rumpled, and evidently had been used before; the vegetable dishes were plumped in the middle; there was salt on one side, but

not on the other; no pepper in the castor, and the mustard certainly had been made for days. The whole cruets-stand would have looked nicer, had it been cleaned and dusted. Altogether there seemed to have been no attempt made to make the table look nice.

The dinner was just the same. The meat was burnt on one side, and half raw on the other; the greens sodden in their own liquor, the potatoes were all in a mash, and Philip eat his portion with great reluctance. And to add to his trouble, Madame plied him with questions as to how he liked his dinner? and pressing invitations, before he had half cleared his plate, to have some more, when that which he had already eaten had nearly made him sick.

A slatternly-looking maid came to clear away the meat and other things, and then brought in a pudding, which at the first glance palpably showed that it was only half-boiled.

Madame was going to help Philip, when he interposed and thanked her, saying that he really did not care for any pudding, 'he had

enjoyed the meat so much, that he really had not any appetite left !’

Madame smiled at him, to Philip it seemed a very sleepy smile, and helped Adèle. She, poor girl, tried to eat it ; but the horrible sticky mass was too much for any civilized being to swallow, and she had to leave it.

When the maid had cleared this away, the dinner was finished. Some dessert was brought in, and two decanters of wine were put on the table, port and sherry. One decanter was cracked down the neck, the other had no stopper, so a wine-cork was thrust into it.

Philip had a glass of sherry, Madame filled herself a bumper of port, swallowed it almost at a gulp, took another, then a third, and soon afterwards ensconced herself in her arm-chair, and went fast asleep.

‘Mamma always goes to sleep after dinner on Sunday,’ said Adèle ; ‘she works so hard all the week that she is quite knocked up.’

‘I expect so,’ said Philip. ‘Shall we go out for another walk, Adèle, for ’pon my soul I can’t stand this sort of thing much longer.’

Adèle was only too pleased to get away to make the faintest objection, so they trudged out again and took a walk over to the Heysons'.

The girls took possession of Adèle and carried her into the garden directly they saw her, probably for a long chat as to Philips' appearance again in Maidstone. He sat down with the old folks and Allen for a talk over a glass of wine. Naturally that which was uppermost in his mind suggested his first question.

'Have you ever noticed anything odd about Mme De Brenne, Mrs Heyson?'

'Why do you ask, Philip?' said Mrs Heyson.

Philip answered by simply detailing what he had noticed that morning and afternoon, and asking whether any of them had remarked those habits in Mme De Brenne.

'We have seen her so seldom, Philip, since her stay here,' said Mrs Heyson, 'that it is hardly possible for us to answer your question. The girls have sometimes spent Sunday with Adèle, but I have never seen Madame but on a week-day.'

‘Why not ask them?’ suggested Mr Heyson.

But Philip did not care to adopt this course, so the subject was dropped; and Edith and Florrey bringing in Adèle at that moment, the talk became general, about everything and nothing in particular.

Philip was quiet, and without appearing to notice it, everybody afterwards remarked upon it, of course assigning every possible cause but the right one to explain it.

As they had not told Madame they would be away for long, they refused the invitation pressed upon them to stay to tea, and went back to Ailsey Villa.

It was just five when they got there, and went through the passage at the side of the house into the back garden, so as to enter by the kitchen.

The kettle was singing merrily on the hob, its big white jet of steam curling up in a swiftly-vanishing cloud, the cups and saucers, the milk jug, and the bread and butter were arranged on the tray ready to take in when the bell should ring; the maid was

probably in her room, tidying her slatternly person.

‘Wait a moment, Philip, please,’ said Adèle, ‘I want to go into the front room first; mamma may be asleep.’

‘All right!’ said Philip; ‘I don’t mind waiting.’

So Adèle went first; the door opened, and at the same moment Philip heard a half-stifled scream. Recognizing Adèle’s voice, he could not restrain himself, but hurried along the narrow passage and entered the dining-room. There a sad picture met his astonished gaze.

Madame was lying on the floor near the fender, against which it appeared that she had fallen, as a dark bruise on her forehead seemed to show. Her dress was so disordered that Adèle, as Philip entered, hastily endeavoured to right it; not, however, in time to prevent him seeing a tumbled mass of dirty under-clothing. He turned his eyes away, and asked Adèle whether he could help her.

‘Oh, yes! I don’t know what to do!’ sobbed Adèle, her face crimson with shame; ‘I have never seen mamma like this before.’

Philip came forward, raised Mme De Brenne's head, put one of the sofa cushions under it to keep it up, then asked Adèle whether she had any *sal volatile* in the house.

‘I think there’s some in ma’s room.’

‘Run and fetch it at once, and if there are any other drugs, bring them too,’ said Philip.

In a few minutes Adèle returned with a small square box, open, and in it Philip found some *laudanum*, some *sal volatile*, and a bottle of red fluid that his practised nose told him was red lavender. Each labelled bottle was marked with the directions as to dose. Philip could not help smiling as he read them. Madame seemed in a dead faint, so he poured out about forty minims of *sal volatile* and twenty of lavender into a wine-glass, added water, and attempted to make her swallow the draught. As the liquid touched the lips, they moved, but no effort was made to swallow.

‘Get me a table-spoon, Adèle ; your mother is in a swoon, and ought to have this draught.’

By means of the spoon, that is, by placing it on her tongue and allowing the draught to run down her throat, Philip got it taken, and

after a few minutes Mme De Brenne moved, then opened her eyes, and sat upright.

In another minute she suddenly rose to her feet, and staggered out of the room.

Philip looked at Adèle, thoroughly astounded at the whole affair ; she, poor child, blushed as her lover looked at her so inquiringly, but Nature prompting her, she did the best that could have been done ; instead of answering, she came and nestled close to him.

Philip sat down, and drew Adèle on to his knees ; as he did so his glance fell on the table still spread with the dessert ; and he instantly noticed that one of the decanters was nearly emptied.

This seemed rather strange to him, especially as he remembered that it was brought to table nearly full ; and he had not drunk more than one glassful—Adèle had not taken port. Who then had finished the remainder ?

Adèle was watching his face wistfully, and, perhaps, divining the nature of his thoughts, it may be from past personal experience, she put her arms lovingly round his neck, and

drawing his head down to her, kissed him softly and whispered to him,

‘Don’t think so! I don’t believe mamma drank the wine.’

Then seeing Philip’s face lose its anxious look, she proposed having the tea in at once.

Philip assented, of course, but could not help inwardly wondering why it was that Adèle had not offered to go after her mother to see how she was.

Then he remembered also that whenever he had proposed at the Heysons’ to walk over to see Mme De Brenne, Adèle had always suggested some other thing to do, and had thus prevented him from going. And now he felt certain that she had not known that he was coming.

They had tea very soberly and quietly, Adèle now and then attempting some lively sally of wit; but all to no purpose, they quickly relapsed into a species of thoughtful silence. The poor child was so oppressed by this, that she hurried over the meal, and as soon as she possibly could had it cleared

away, whispering to the maid to take a good cupful up to Mme De Brenne.

‘Come into the garden, Philip,’ said she ; ‘I don’t like to sit here any more so quiet.’

Once in the garden, small as Mme De Brenne’s was, they managed to shake off the feeling that had oppressed them in the dining-room ; for the house was half hidden by a big jessamine on the wall and the thick-leaved fruit-trees.

Then Philip and Adèle talked lovingly and bravely of the time to come, when all their feelings and aspirations should mingle, and their life be as one. And Philip poured into her eager listening ears all the hopes he had formed, and the plans he had devised for their future. How her bright face lit up with joy at every word of his, and every earnest, loving look from his deep brown eyes.

She seemed a child beside him ; for he was so tall, she so *petite* ; and his big strong arm, circling her bonny waist, looked as if it could lift her from the ground like a feather.

How she echoed all his hopes, believing as he believed, hoping as he hoped, planning as

he planned. And the castles they two built, *torres de España*, with such easy, happy confidence in their own powers and the future that spread before them! And Adèle laughed, as well as blushed, when, in one of his many panoramic views of their life to come, Philip said,

‘How beautiful, darling, it will be to hear our children’s voices, and feel and see them clinging to us with grasps of such pure love!’

Neither saw in that far distant future the gathering of the cloud, that one day bursting over their home should endanger all their cherished hopes and dreams, and perhaps crush the very love they bore each other! How could they?

After a while Adèle and Philip went into the house again, and Madame came down, looking strangely bleared and sleepy, but very sensible of what she was saying, with the slight exception that she would say it all over again the next time she spoke.

As she sat on her arm-chair, full to the light, Philip looked well at her, and as he saw her that night, he never could forget the terrible

impression it made upon him. Madame was about medium height, as one could easily see even when she was seated, with brown hair plentifully streaked with gray, gray eyes that now blinked at the light in a fitful, sleepy way, features that once must have been comely and sweet, but were now strangely ruddy, and the face puffed and harsh. The lips thick and sensuous, the chin undecided and half lost in the fat of the neck. She wore a cap, but as it was set on wrong and all on one side, it only added to the grotesque character of her appearance. The bruise on the forehead was nearly black, but the swelling had subsided.

Philip looked at her wonderingly, and with a feeling of great sadness. He could not quite comprehend the reason why she looked so peculiar; or perhaps he refused to allow his senses to be convinced of the horrible truth, no matter what proof additional was offered to them.

He was glad when the rambling conversation was interrupted by the necessity of his going; and he shook hands with Mme De

Brenne with a feeling of positive relief. Her hand was warm and disagreeably moist.

He kissed Adèle in the passage, and went out. A minute after Adèle joined him, her face flushed either with shame or grief, Philip could not guess, and together they walked to the station.

Another shake of the hand, wistful eyes watching the train steam away from the platform, then a little lithe figure slowly turns away, and so ends Philip's never-forgotten first visit to Mme De Brenne. Begun so promisingly, the day had finished with a terrible revelation. Philip had remembered Mme De Brenne so different, so kind, so cheerful, and so wise. He had such distinct recollections of her motherly goodness to him, when at school; and her solicitude for her child, evinced by her interviews with Mrs Heyson, and the letter to Dr Renhard, had prepared him to meet the same Mme De Brenne of his old school days. It is impossible to analyze his thoughts as he journeyed back to London; all was confused, and perhaps he hardly was able to think! Excepting of one

thing, one thought that haunted him for days and weeks afterwards, and that was, how to take Adèle away from her mother !

It was a long time before he could answer this self-imposed question.

## CHAPTER XI.

PHILIP IS REMINDED BY LETTER THAT HE HAS BEEN INVITED TO DINE WITH MR JOHN ALLERTON—TOM AND HE GO TOGETHER—SOME DETAILS OF THE DINNER AND THE PLEASANT GAUCHERIES OF MESSRS ALLERTON FILS, OF THE DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, AND OF THE PROMINENT PART PHILIP PLAYED IN THE ENTERTAINMENT.

A FEW days after his visit to Mme De Brenne, Philip received a daintily scented note, stamped with a wonderful seal, that bore a distant resemblance to a reversed pepper-castor, with a griffin, all head and tongue, glaring out of it most horribly at the vulgar of this world.

It was a letter from Allerton's, with the usual intimation that Mr and Mrs Allerton request the pleasure of Mr Philip Darrell's company to dinner, on Wednesday the 18th inst., &c., &c.

Tom came in the same day and warmly urged his brother not to refuse as they would

certainly have a fine time. Consequently Philip, having first asked and obtained leave of absence for the evening in question, answered the note in the affirmative, and to make more certain, Tom himself insisted on posting it.

Philip wrote the same evening to Adèle, informing her of his forthcoming dinner, and promising to tell her all about everything the next time he should be in Maidstone.

In due course Wednesday came round, and Philip was deep in the affairs of his toilet, when Tom drove up to the door in a Hansom. He ran up-stairs at once and found his brother struggling madly with a cravat, narrow and white, which he was attempting to tie. He just accomplished it as his brother burst into the room.

‘Shall you be long, old fellow?’ said Tom, after shaking hands.

‘Only a few minutes now, as I’ve managed this confounded tie,’ answered Philip, and he certainly soon slipped on his waistcoat, and settled his cuffs, and his coat quickly following the rest of his habiliments, he stood arrayed in the panoply of evening dress. Gloves and

hat finished his attire, and soon the cab whirled them over the stones, and in about half-an-hour deposited them at Mr Allerton's gate.

They were in good time, about half-an-hour to spare before dinner, and Tom, who knew nearly all the people assembled, dragged his brother through the room, introducing him right and left as Dr Philip Darrell.

Mr Allerton himself introduced him to his wife and his two sons, who welcomed him cordially.

Mrs Allerton was very tall, somewhat bony, and with features that still endeavoured to show that she had been good-looking once upon a time, though now her complexion was harsh and rough, like an old washerwoman's crinkled hand.

The sons were tall, thin, and with little bullet-like heads, and prominent features. The elder, in whose honour the dinner was held, was quite six feet in height, dark, and with a promise of developing into a somewhat handsome man. His brother was nearly as tall, with the same features, only coarser; great

red hands and hard knuckles, and a general look as if he did not quite know what to do with his limbs. Both tilted their chairs to an alarming extent, and Philip, as he talked to them, every moment expected to see them tumble backwards. Mrs Allerton called out to them several times to behave properly, but without making any impression. They seemed to think that it was the thing to behave just as it suited them without any regard for any one else.

‘Dinner is served,’ roared a man-servant in a livery covered with bright silver buttons, every one with the glaring griffin upon them.

‘Mr Darrell, will you take Mrs Rorke down? Tom, I know you’ll take Sophy McCleak, you rogue,’ said Mrs Allerton. The gentlemen selected their ladies, and all marched soberly to the feast.

Philip was rather disgusted at being paired off with Mrs Rorke, a little fat, podgy woman, with half-shut eyes, and an immense mouth ; white curls dangling on each side of her face, and a great broad parting in her hair. She

was covered with jewels, two or three rings on each finger of her hands, long ear-rings, a big staring brooch, and a marvellous gold chain round her neck; bracelets as thick and as heavy as she could wear, and a wonderful dress of some pale blue silky material.

She called Philip 'Doctor' every time she spoke, with an accent that savoured of the emerald Isle.

Every course of the dinner—things in season or out of season, all were there—found Mrs Rorke ready to tackle something; and Philip watched her with a species of amazement stow away plateful after plateful.

'Oh, Docther! will you pass me that pepper?'

'Can I give you some sherry, Mrs Rorke?'

'Oh, thank you, Docther,'—and so on through the dinner. The guests said very little to each other, all their faculties being absorbed in the important duty of eating.

Philip, who ate moderately, had abundant time and opportunity to attend to Mrs Rorke, and to watch the feeders. He afterwards

declared that he saw one of the company sit bolt upright after the third course, and deliberately measure the distance between the edge of the table and his stomach. There was a space left of about an inch and a half, and the man, some city fellow, actually smiled all over. Philip conjectured that he intended to eat until the table and his waistcoat met.

Most of the elderly men threw their knives into their mouth with the utmost recklessness, lapping up the sauces and gravies with very audible sound, and poured the wines down their throats in such quantities as showed that they were experienced imbibers. The younger fellows ate more decently and drank less; probably not yet having properly seasoned themselves with years of good-living.

‘Champagne, gentlemen and ladies,’ called out Mr Allerton from the head of the table.

The corks popped, and the men-servants filled the glasses nearly to the brim.

‘My son’s health!’ Up went the glasses, down went the wine amid the muttered ‘Many happy returns of the day,’ from the

guests. Then a moment of silence. Everybody waited.

‘Now, John, my boy! get up and answer to the toast!’

After a moment’s hesitation John got up, and clutching his glass, still half full of wine, he turned a sickly smile round the table, and said—

‘Ladies and gentlemen, you are very kind to wish me many happy returns of the day; I’m twenty-one to-day—and I hope you all enjoy your wine.’

With that he raised his glass to his lips and attempted to toss the champagne airily down his throat, but the fizzy fluid trickled into his windpipe, he clutched wildly at his neighbour, nearly choked, and suddenly shot the wine out of his mouth in a horrible splutter all over his father.

‘Damme!’ cried Mr Allerton. ‘What are you up to?’

‘I beg your pardon, father,’ said his son; ‘it’s quite by accident.’

‘I wish you’d send your accidents elsewhere, then, stoopid!’ was the rejoinder.

The guests made vigorous efforts to restrain their laughter, but notwithstanding a sort of titter went round the table.

After this little incident the dinner progressed steadily, and gradually people began to talk, and the conversation soon becoming general, the son and heir got over the bashfulness consequent upon his awkward wine-drinking. However, his brother, who had not spoken once all dinner-time, had calmly attacked the wines with all the raw audacity of youth; and his voice also began to mingle with the general talk.

Gradually all eyes were turned towards his end of the table, and a stillness came over the company in expectation, that was soon gratified, of approaching fun.

Mr William Allerton was nearly drunk, and most wonderfully loquacious and very loud. His neighbour, a cousin rather pretty, was listening to him with a puzzled face, gradually turning very red as he concluded what he was saying.

‘What are you talking about, Willie,’ cried his mother, ‘to make your cousin blush so?’

‘Oh, I was only telling her about what I saw in the Strand the other day, when the Queen went to lay that foundation stone,’ said Willie.

‘What was it? Tell it aloud!’ cried the people near him.

‘All right! Here goes then! On Thursday I was waiting in the Strand, by that big Insurance Office, to see the Queen pass. Well, there was a sort of stand erected on one of the balconies, and all of a sudden a dainty little boot showed itself out of the window, then came an ankle, and the leg entire followed, rested on a chair placed to receive it; then the other foot and leg followed. The prettiest ankle and the roundest, nicest shaped calf of a leg that ever I saw, and the most elegantly cut and deeply embroidered draw—’

‘Stop! stop!’ roared his father. ‘Your impudent young dog!’ A burst of laughter came from everybody at the table, and Mr Willie Allerton, in exuberant joy at having created such a sensation, threw up his arms and tilted back his chair. But his deep potations had so unsteadied his judgment, that he

tilted too much, and with a roar and a frantic clutch at his cousin's dress, his heels shot into the air, and he went backwards to the ground, dragging off in his grasp half his cousin's bodice and smashing the back of the chair, besides giving his head a most frightful bump as he went to the floor.

His poor cousin shrieked, partly with fear, but more from the sudden exposure of her snow-white chemise, whereof only the lace-edging was intended to be shown to the gaze of man.

Mr Allerton shouted, 'Damme! the boy's killed!' Mrs Allerton screamed 'Help!' and perfectly unable to control their merriment any longer the guests positively roared with laughter.

Altogether there was the devil to pay and no pitch hot.

'Docther,' suddenly said Mrs Rorke, 'for the Lord's sake help the boy, he's my nephew, don't you see!'

At this appeal the laughter calmed down, and Philip advanced to the scene of action with his features as sedate as he could make

them at so short a notice, and helped to raise Mr Willie Allerton from the floor.

Either from the fall, or from a splinter of the chair, he was bleeding from the back of the head ; and Philip, at a glance seeing how tipsy he was, advised that he should be immediately taken up-stairs to his room. Miss Rorke had already disappeared. Once young Allerton was got up-stairs Philip bathed his head, and somebody bringing some adhesive plaster, he strapped up a narrow cut just at the nape of the neck, and ordered a handkerchief to be tied round his head, partly because some one suggested it, and more because he rather liked the fun of the idea what a ridiculous object the fellow would look afterwards. He then had him put on the bed, and soon his hard breathing told them he had gone to sleep.

His mother sat for a while, with clasped hands and a grotesque look of bereavement on her face, by his bedside ; but presently, noting that his deep-breathing changed into a regular loud snore, she left him to his slumbers, Philip assuring her that he was not

seriously injured by his fall, and that Master Willie could not do better than sleep.

As Mrs Allerton and Philip re-entered the dining-room, Mrs Rorke met them at the door, and all her chains and ear-rings and bracelets and brooch rattling from the strong emotion that shook her fat body, she besought Philip in a lachrymose tone of voice to tell her how her *dear* nephew was.

‘He’s snoring like a bullock, ma’am,’ said Philip.

‘Oh!’ cried Mrs Rorke, and went back to her seat.

‘Come and sit here by me, Mr Darrell,’ cried old Allerton, and as Philip approached he grasped his hand and, shaking it vehemently, said, ‘Damme, sir, I’m much obliged to you! I shall be pleased to take wine with you. Joseph! here—champagne!’ A grave mutual nod of the head as the glasses were raised and slowly emptied. Then Philip found himself by little Miss Rorke, in a fresh pink-coloured dress, and naturally she asked after her cousin. On Philip assuring her that he was in no wise hurt seriously, she began to

chat and laugh with him in a very animated manner.

Philip noticed that the man who had measured the amount of space he had to swell out in observed them very narrowly, and also that glances were exchanged by him and Mrs Rorke ; as the lady smiled back very graciously and significantly, the measurer of space ceased his observant look, and Philip laughed and joked with Miss Rorke more than ever.

Soon the ladies rose, and amidst the bows of the gentlemen, sailed majestically out of the room, Miss Rorke promising Philip to keep a vacant chair near her for his special benefit, when he came up to tea.

The conversation soon became animated round the table. Tom Darrell related some choice stories of rowdyism from the States, spiced with just the requisite dash of double-entente to render them unfit for ladies' ears, and consequently peculiarly agreeable to gentlemen over their wine. When Philip was called upon by his brother for some anecdote, he convulsed them all by his account of the composite skeleton, and the

subsequent battle between Brown, Jones, Robinson, and Smith, on the day of Resurrection, as related by us in the fifth chapter of this book.

During this time the 'measurer of space' seemingly had attained the utmost limit of distention that he could bear, for he was nodding sleepily over his wine. One or two other podgy city men were doing the same, so that Mr Allerton proposed they should join the ladies. The proposal was carried *nem. con.*, and the sleepy ones rousing themselves, all trooped up-stairs to the drawing-room.

Philip saw Miss Rorke at a little table covered with albums and print-books. He quickly made his way to her, and they were soon deeply engaged poring over the prints, with many a sly quiet laugh at Philip's odd renderings of the usual description of the places they were looking at.

This was one of Philip's peculiarities; a few glasses of wine dispelled his customary shyness of manner, and seemed to liberate his tongue from its bondage; with the consequence, that he was as lively and agreeable a

conversationalist at such moments as any man could be.

Presently a lumbering step was heard on the stairs, and the next moment the door was thrust open, and Mr Willie Allerton, in all the fantasqueness of his novel head-gear, came into the room; somewhat unsteadily it must be confessed, for he managed to knock over a little whist-table, inlaid with rosewood.

He soon perceived Philip and his cousin at their little table, and as they were laughing, he came to the conclusion that they were laughing at him. Striding across to them he demanded of Philip in a loud voice, 'What the devil he was laughing at?'

Philip looked up for a moment, then took the book of French prints, and turning the illustration so that every one in the room could see it, as well as Master Willie, he said, still looking at young Allerton:

'We were laughing at a Booby!'—and as the picture was a representation of Polichinelle knocking a big country bumpkin over, everybody caught up the quip, and a burst of laughter hailed the double-edged repartee.

Something in Philip's manner, or his square, strong-looking body, caused Master Allerton to reflect, so he held out his hand to Philip, who gave his, and Willie said in a maudlin tone of voice that he 'was very glad to see him, and that he was a funny dog.' After that the hopeful youth betook him to a sofa, and went to sleep.

Tea was brought up and handed round soon after, and Mrs Rorke joined Philip and her daughter. The bejewelled lady seemed much delighted that Philip took so much interest in her little girl, so she proceeded to tell him, warning him that he must be careful with her as she was so very susceptible. The girl blushed as her vulgar wretch of a mother talked like this, and seizing an opportunity, went to the other side of the room and sat down by Sophy McCleak, much to Tom Darrell's disgust, who was at that moment vigorously flirting with the said Sophy, a very handsome brunette.

Mrs Rorke noted the disappointed look Philip gave as Jenny Rorke left her seat, and to retrieve her error, only stayed talking for a

few minutes to the martyred fellow; then went over to her daughter and told her she was a very naughty little thing to run away as she had. But little Jenny did not return to Philip's table, and as he did not like to go to sit by her for fear of its being noticed, he continued turning over the prints with a rueful countenance. Philip was getting tired of the whole affair. The old fogeys were all in a knot at the other end of the room, talking sleepily about the last prices of stocks and the rise that morning in cotton. The 'measurer of space' was boldly sleeping in an easy-chair, his nose high in the air, his mouth wide open, making a fine display of the rows of yellow teeth that garnished his jaws.

By-and-by Mr Allerton came over to Philip and began a conversation; others joined them, and soon Philip found himself the centre of an excited group. Some one had said that he admired M. Ledru-Rollin.

'What, that rascally Radical?' cried a seller of hops.

'I'm afraid,' said Mr Allerton, 'that few people admire that man in England.'

‘Simply because they neither understand him nor his principles of action!’ said Philip.

‘Do you agree with that dangerous man’s principles?’ cried the seller of hops to Philip.

‘I do, to a great extent,’ said he, ‘and for this reason, that the efforts instituted by M. Ledru-Rollin and his colleagues in the recent Revolution in France were all directed to the foundation and the maintenance of order, and the slow diffusion of Republican principles throughout the country.’

‘Yes, indeed, they maintained order so well that the lower orders rose against them, and had it not been for that poet fellow—’

‘Lamartine, I suppose you mean?’ interrupted Philip.

‘Yes, that’s him,’ continued the seller of hops. ‘If it hadn’t been for him they’d have been upset just in the same way that the king was.’

Philip was about to reply, but noticing an expression on all the faces that indicated that they agreed with the last speaker, he said nothing more on the subject—but remarked to Mr Allerton that electricity was being well

investigated at that present time. Mr Allerton stared at him and mumbled something about his not having studied electricity much. The other men deflected the talk on to the Stock Exchange, and Philip, finding himself neglected as a 'fellow who agreed with the Republican Rollin,' left the group and wandered disconsolately up and down the room, gazing at the pictures on the walls, till he was thoroughly tired. He noticed that Tom was flirting again with Sophy McCleak, and that Willie Allerton had roused him from his slumbers and was conversing sleepily with Jenny Rorke.

At last, at about half-past eleven, he determined to take his departure, and so bade good-night to his hosts and to those to whom he had been introduced, not forgetting Mrs Rorke and Jenny, and even the 'measurer of space,' whom Mrs Rorke introduced at the moment as—'My husband, Mr Rorke,' and who shook hands with him, and asked him to dine with them 'one of these days.'

Just as he was leaving Tom joined him and asked him to wait a bit, as he would go

with him. Philip accordingly waited a few minutes, when Tom, having finished his adieux, they took a cab and departed.

‘ Well, Phil, how did you enjoy yourself ? ’ said Tom as they rattled along.

‘ Pretty well, ’ answered Philip. ‘ The best fun was that affair of the youth come of age spluttering his wine over his father, and that youngster shooting his legs into the air as he did ! ’ and both laughed over the affair again.

Tom chaffed his brother about little Miss Rorke, and of course Philip retorted by charging him with his flagrantly open flirtation with Sophy McCleak.

They separated in good spirits and well pleased with each other at Doctor Renhard’s, Tom keeping the cab to drive him to his apartments in Little Reider Street, St James, where he sat smoking till an unearthly hour of the morning, with his legs stuck upon the rails of the balcony. He was well pleased with his evening. He had flirted the whole time with Miss Sophy, and congratulated himself on having made quite an impression. It

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need not be wondered at that he should stroke his moustache and *Impériale* with great complacency as he thought of these little matters, for Miss Sophy had really been quite captivated by his handsome face and agreeable manners.

## CHAPTER XII.

THE AMUSEMENTS AND THE COMPANIONS OF MR THOMAS  
DARRELL—AN INTRIGUE WITH A GIRL WHO IS ONLY A  
LABOURER'S DAUGHTER.

MR Thomas Darrell has been presented to the reader, as yet, in a not very unfavourable light. His past career is not within the province of this story, which only deals with his relations to Philip, Adèle de Brenne, and Allen Heyson; and of course with the two other persons introduced in this present chapter.

Whatever his former life had been, it had left him one great dislike—a dislike for reflection. What was the good of it? he would say. None; excepting that it always makes a fellow (like T.D.) feel mopish and dull! Bother reflection! Always bringing back the memory of our pleasant little peccadilloes, and somehow, too, of the fact that the enjoyment was almost invariably on one side. The other

had an unfortunate and very foolish habit of going to the wall! Not, be it noted, that Mr Tom Darrell cared in the least who went to the wall provided that he himself did not go, still the wall-goers occasionally shot flying arrows, like the Parthians of old, which were so tipped with the poison of sarcasm as to leave an unpleasant feeling all over one, even after they had been plucked out. Now Reflection had a nasty way of its own in bringing back all these disagreeable concomitants of, or rather attendants on, Pleasures, and dressing them up afresh in the old garb.

Consequently, in recent times, Tom had sought, but to a certain extent in vain, for pleasures that would yield him the due amount of amusement without any of the disagreeables above mentioned. Now what more ennobling pastime does our modern civilization offer us, than, for instance, Billiards! more especially, too, when one is conscious of a high degree of skilful handling of the Cue! And be it particularly noted that we do not pretend to mention the noble game as played in private homes—that! Pooh! There's no fun in that

sort of thing. No! We mean the splendid sport to be had in the Billiard-room of a Public-house, where congenial spirits do assemble and with cunning canon and dexterous twisting of the balls into pockets achieve glorious successes. The sweet music—what harmony can equal it!—of the rattle made by the marker as he scores our points, how pleasantly it falls on the ear! And the invariable and frequent demands for grog, or ale, or if the player be of a very run-to-seed and dissipated character, Seltzer and Brandy or Band S, as these merry fellows facetiously abbreviate it; how much do they not help to promote the due amount of conviviality required for the safe exhibition of the Sharper's powers of skill, and the easy and pleasant despoiling of the poor Flat who attempts to measure himself against the quiet rogue!

Tom Darrell rather enjoyed this style of thing. He had done so much of it in America that few men could beat him at the game, and occasionally, as he was by no means wholly vicious, he took great pleasure in watching the play; and after seeing which was the dupe

and which the duper, gradually working himself into the game, and by superior art in the art of trickery actually doubling upon the sharper and beating him at his own game. But the old proverb teaches that 'no one can throw dirt without some of it sticking to the thrower's hand;' and Tom, by this frequent association with the sharpers of the billiard-room, became, if not actually a rogue himself, at least accustomed to look with a very tolerant eye on the vices and tricks of the class. In fact, it has been hinted, though this must be taken under reservation, that as Tom became known to the sharpers who frequent these places, and after he had done them some little damage by his superior play, one of the number was deputed by the rest to hint to him that if he refrained from interference in *their* play, they would always take good care not to molest him in *his*. And upon this understanding, which really made Tom one of themselves, they continued to ply their nefarious calling.

I remember hearing once an anecdote of one of the fellows with whom Tom was very intimate. This individual was deep on pipes.

Cigars he looked upon as playthings—cigarettes he utterly despised. But a pipe! Ah! there you have something worth the having. Now he one day became the possessor, most enviable, of a wonderful Meerschaum, carved and embellished, to his eyes, with lovely nudities—nymphs at play among vines. Shortly after he had bought this pipe, he met his friend Tom Darrell, and the following conversation took place:

‘Hallo, old boy; where do you hail from? I’ve not seen you since last Monday,’ said young Sholt.

‘More have I you,’ replied Tom.

‘Ah! Then, of course, you haven’t seen my pipe?’ cried Sholt.

‘No! have you got a new one?’ asked Tom.

‘Look here, old fellow!’ said Sholt, dragging out the case containing the wonderful pipe, and springing it open he displayed it to the admiring gaze of his friend.

‘What a jolly pipe!’ cries Tom.

‘Ah!’ says Sholt, ‘it is a fine pipe.’

‘I call it a nobby pipe!’ continues Tom.

‘That it is,’ says Sholt.

‘In fact,’ says Tom, finishing his examination of the carved nudities, and returning the case and pipe to the owner with a deep sigh, ‘in fact you might call it a “damn” nobby pipe!’ And with this they separated, one rejoicing over the possession of the ‘damn nobby pipe,’ and the other half envious of its owner.

Such is a fair sample of the style of conversation usually held among Tom and his intimates. Some outsider once remarked, after listening for a half-hour to their talk, that it appeared to him that Lindley Murray should be modernized, especially as regards the degrees of comparison; as although he, L. M., gave the degrees of, say, Good, as—Positive, Good — Comparative, Better — Superlative, Best, modern youth put it thus—Positive, Good—Comparative, Jolly Good—Superlative, Damned Good,—and so on of the rest of the expletives.

Tom Darrell, with his easy manner, his handsome face, his ‘bit’ of Yankeeism still clinging to his intonation, was an especial

favourite with this class of young men. In fact, they looked up to him as one who had twice as much 'cheek' as the boldest among them; who swore, occasionally, so horribly, that none of them could equal it, although it must be said that they did not fail *for want of trying*—and finally as one who had done, could and would do, things of which they hardly dared to think!

Months slip by quickly when one's occupation is certain and pleasant; and Tom was agreeably surprised to receive leave of holiday from Mr Allerton for some three weeks, after he had been with him about eight months. Of course he joyfully accepted the offer, and receiving at the same time an invitation from an old friend at Shirley, he felt assured of having a very pleasant time.

The woods of pine, and oak, and beech about the hills at Shirley were favourite walks of Tom's, and here in one of his roving expeditions he met several times a young girl, rather good-looking, who invariably looked shyly aside until he had passed. This some-

what piqued Tom, and as the girl did not appear to belong to an exalted station of society, at least judging by her dress, he made up his mind to consider her as offering a good opportunity for 'sport.'

The girl was dark, sun-burnt, with a little *piquante nez retroussé* style of face to which Tom had always declared himself partial. The consequence was that he made it a special duty to be meeting her every day, and two or three times a day.

One day she dropped a tin pannikin, just as Tom passed. What could be more natural than for him to pick it up for her and present it to her with his most winning smile, and when the girl thanked him, her face crimson from embarrassment, Tom only smiled again, and raised his hat to her as he walked quietly away. After that, when they passed each other Tom quietly wished her good morning, and good night. Soon he walked some little distance by her side, once asking as a joke to be allowed to look into the tin pannikin she carried, when he found that it contained a peculiar mess of potatoes and meat, and a big

hunch of bread. 'I suppose you're taking some one his dinner?' asked Tom.

'Yes—father,' said the girl.

'Oh, does he work near here?'

'Yes! In the gravel-pit by the Archbishop's,' said she.

Tom thereupon began a dissertation on gravel-pits, tin-pannikins, and meat and potatoes, in such a ludicrous mingling of the subjects, that it seemed at last as if the father of the girl was digging on the hill for meat and potatoes, and she was carrying several gravel-pits in a tin pannikin for his dinner. The girl could not restrain her laughter, and Tom took advantage of the merriment to pinch her cheek and remark how pretty her ears would look with ear-rings in them. This sobered the girl in an instant, and the rest of the walk was made in silence.

Several such meetings, however, and the laughter Tom's strangely funny stories caused her, soon created a species of intimacy between them, and presently poor Katie learned to expect Tom to walk with her, and enliven the way with his merry conversation. She thought

he was so handsome, and really a gentleman ! Therein lay the great and dangerous charm of the girl's walks with Tom Darrell. They had always kept to the straight path that led to the gravel-pit, and Tom, who now shook hands with her, always left her as she neared the scene of her father's work. But one day he waited for her return, seating himself on heathery grass, under the shade of the firs, quietly reading a novel.

Katie came along the path, walking slowly, and with very sober looks. Certainly Tom thought she was very pretty ; a ray of sunlight glancing between the fir-branches just touched her face. Her ripe red lips, her full throat, and growing bust ; for she wanted but short months to womanhood, and a certain elasticity and suppleness of limb gave her a good springy *démarche*, characteristic of the better of her class.

Tom waited until she was quite near him, then called her, and bade her come to him.

Looking up, she saw him, and instantly her sober look vanished, and the sun-browned face rippled over with pleased smiles, and she

came to where Tom was sitting, or rather half lying at length. As she walked towards him, Tom could easily see her feet, and some part of her ancles and legs, from the shortness of the dress she wore; and when she came near and sat down, he could not help remarking to her with a laugh—

‘You’ve got a very neat ancle, Katie.’

She blushed first, then laughed. Tom noted that laugh, and smiled. Oh, could she but have known what that smile meant, the young girl would have fled from him as from a pestilence!

‘Have you ever had your ears pierced, Katie?’ asked Tom.

‘Yes, I think so! But I never had but a silver pair of ear-rings to wear. Those I put on of a Sunday,’ replied Kate.

‘Well, look here,’ said Tom, ‘how would these suit you? I should say they just hit your complexion.’

With that he took from his waistcoat pocket a little card-board box, and opening it, displayed to Katie’s eager gaze a very pretty pair of coral ear-rings.

‘Oh, how pretty!’ said she.

‘Do you like them?’

‘Yes.’

‘Then let me put them in your ears,’ said Tom.

Katie hesitated a moment; but as Tom held up the little jewels and smiled that rare sweet smile of his, she came nearer and sat down quite close to him.

Tom took hold of the little gold wire, and easily hooked the first one in. The other he tried once or twice, but did not succeed till Kate turned half round; then he managed it; but her face was so near his, her soft dark hair caressing his cheek so sweetly, and her lips were so full and red, that Tom, unable to resist the temptation, kissed her full on the lips.

Kate started to get up, but Tom caught her round the waist and prevented her.

‘Oh, let me go! you frighten me!’ she cried.

‘Nonsense!’ said Tom; ‘I only kissed you! I couldn’t help doing it, you looked so pretty! But don’t go, Kate dear, just now.’

‘I must!’ said the girl; but as Tom still held her waist was unable to do so.

‘No! you mustn’t—at least not till you say you’ve forgiven me,’ said Tom.

‘Well, there, I forgive you! Now let me go! do!’ pleaded Kate.

‘I want to tell you something, Kate, before you go,’ said Tom, ‘and besides, I’m afraid you have not forgiven me yet! Don’t you know the old saying, “*Kiss* and forgive?” Well, you have only forgiven me, you haven’t kissed me!’

Kate looked at him with her dark bright eyes and met his eager eyes, full of fire, fixed on her. She thought she read love in that glance, and Tom’s devilish wit, telling him half her thought, he poured into her ears an avowal of love; and so passionately and warmly, that yielding to the pressure of his clasping hand, Kate allowed herself to be pressed in his arms, and returned greedily the burning kisses he gave her!

A noise of footsteps startled them! Kate sprang to her feet, her face crimson, her eyes dim, and her lips moist and hot with the taste

of the kisses pressed on them. Seizing her little pannikin, she ran hastily along the road, and had just turned a corner of the wood, as a labouring man with his pick and spade on his shoulder drew near to where Tom was sitting.

‘A fine evening, master,’ cried he as he passed.

‘Beautiful,’ said Tom in reply, and the labourer’s exclamation served as a hint to see how time had passed. It was nearly five o’clock! and Tom had actually been talking with Katie for nearly two hours!

He got up, shook the heather bells off his coat, and walked quickly to his friend’s house, getting there in nice time for toilet and dinner.

The dinner was well cooked, well served, and consisted chiefly of the dishes for which Tom would have voted had he been asked to choose them; consequently he enjoyed it very much, none the less for the lingering fragrance of the heather that clung to him, and the pleasant thoughts the fragrance awakened.

He was more witty than usual during

the dinner-time, and astonished even his friend by the liveliness of his sallies, and his droll stories—moderated and pruned, so as to suit the company at table, and the ladies—were relished exceedingly.

Meanwhile, Katie Wright had reached home, and by some subterfuge had explained her long delay, then ran up-stairs to her little bit of a bed-room to put on her ear-rings, which she had quickly taken out of her ears when she had heard the footsteps in the wood. She put one in, and searched in her pocket for the second. She could not find it! Without a moment's hesitation she ran down-stairs, and was going out to the wood to look for it, as she felt certain she must have dropped it when she took it out of her ear, but before she reached the door, her father's voice called out to her to come to him.

For a moment she felt inclined to run off without taking any heed of his call, but directly went out to the little slip of garden at the back of the house, where she saw her father digging. 'What do you want, father?' said she.

‘Jest come here, gal; I want you to go to the village for me,’ said her father.

‘Oh, whatever can you want to-night, father?’ asked Katie in a vexed tone of voice, for the village lay in the very opposite direction to the wood.

Her father looked up, catching the unusual tone in which she spoke, and stared at her excited face, for she was trembling with the fear that her ear-ring might be found by some one who would make inquiries about it.

‘What ails thee, lass?’ cried the old man; —he was the one who had passed Tom Darrell, seated in the wood, and had bidden him a good day.

‘Nothing, father; I’m only hot running down the stairs when you called,’ answered Katie.

At this moment a noise in the house attracted her attention; she turned her head, and at the instant her father caught sight of the little red and gold ear-ring. He stepped up to her very quickly and held her arm for a moment, saying there was a little spot on her

neck that he had never seen before, and in that short time looked well at the ear-ring.

It was a single piece of red coral set in gold, carved with a Maltese cross and a little round knob exactly in the centre of the cross.

The father noticed it the more particularly because he had never seen Katie with ear-rings but on Sunday, and then only with the old silver pair. He was a suspicious man by nature, who knew how pretty his girl was, and so was rendered very watchful. This circumstance of a new ear-ring, and one which he saw at a glance was of greater value than Katie could ever have money of her own to pay for, besides the fact that the village did not boast of a jeweller's shop, made him anxious and determined to sift the affair to the bottom.

‘Who gave you this ear-ring, my gal?’ said he.

Kate's face flushed crimson as she replied, ‘Nobody, father; I found it to-day in the wood, and just put it in my ear to see how it would look.’

‘Ah! did you?’ said her father. ‘And whereabouts in the wood did you find it?’

‘I couldn’t quite tell you the spot, but I can show it you when we go to work to-morrow morning, early,’ answered Katie.

John Wright looked steadfastly at his daughter as she said this; he still held her arm and felt how she trembled, and her face was flushed and hot, and a strange, unusual light was in her eyes. His rough common sense told him that there was something underlying all this agitation. And thinking of the question, and of how Katie had started when he asked her where she found the ear-ring, he became convinced that he was being deceived.

However, he said nothing more about the ear-drop, but told Kate to go to the village to get some tobacco and a peculiar sort of long clay pipe, very deep in the bowl, of which he showed her a broken specimen, directing her to the wrong shop purposely to keep her longer from the house. And as Kate started for the village he sprang over his garden fence and walked quickly to the wood, muttering as he went that ‘though he was nigh upon fifty-two, his eyes were good at seeing yet.’

## CHAPTER XIII.

KATIE WRIGHT'S FATHER—A PRODUCT OF OUR BOASTED  
CIVILIZATION—HIS SUSPICIONS—HIS DISCOVERY OF THE  
SECOND EAR-RING—KATE LEADS HIM PAST THE RIGHT  
PLACE—JOHN WRIGHT SETS HIMSELF TO WATCH.

JOHN WRIGHT, Katie's father, was an honest, hard-working labourer. His principal ideas of life were about three in number. He passionately loved his daughter Katie—he had a vague sort of love for his wife, compounded of long custom and the link Katie made between them—and he detested and hated the creature commonly called a 'gentleman.' From long observation he had arrived at a species of idea that the labourer received more insult from the gentleman than from any one else. A pretty working-girl was especially an object of attraction to these so-called 'gentlemen.' It—for be it noticed that we adopt somewhat of the phraseology of the *Soi-disant*—it was a toy very easily bought,

and uncommonly easy to cast aside when broken. The great world smiled at the wild oats among which the common flowers of the people were occasionally planted. And when the common flower had its stalk broken, and was cast aside, the same world that smiled at the wild oats, that certainly do wave very prettily and *emptily* to the slightest breeze, had nothing but a sneer or a scowl for the miserable trampled flower. Such, at all events, was common report and feeling among the working people; and John Wright, who was labourer to the back-bone, shared their foolish prejudice to the full. He was rough, dirty, and grizzled with hardship and hard work. As he walked along with a peculiar shuffling, stamping walk, a stoop in his shoulders, the eyes looking down, it must be confessed that he looked an awkward customer. Our forefathers were right to keep these people with brass collars on their necks, and treat them simply as serfs. What higher scale in humanity did they occupy? How are they treated now-a-days? Instead of a collar of brass soldered round the neck, the nineteenth

century keeps a veil thick with the mists of ignorance and crime thrown over them, stifling them beneath its weight.

John Wright was a worthy product of a civilization that dare boast itself higher and purer than any that have gone before. And certainly he did justice to his education. He had grown up among men, to whom an oath was every fourth or fifth word of their talk; whose thoughts were so obscene, and their rendering of them so filthy, that these pages would be defiled by my writing a single sentence of them. The foulest, most loathsome words tinged with *blood* almost every phrase they spoke. Who has not shuddered on passing a group of labourers laughing and talking, to hear the horrible language they use? Who has not inwardly shuddered at the thought, that such men in this century, in rich powerful England, could exist, and walk the same highways that delicate, dainty men and women and innocent children tread?

And from the usual type John Wright differed but slightly. He had some knowledge of reading and writing, and his mother, a

brave, honest woman, taught him in his childhood some vague form of religious belief. But nothing remained to him of her pious teachings but some fragments of hymns, and an undefined idea that there existed some power that held the command of every created thing in its mighty grasp. Farther than that his religion did not go.

In person this man had something engaging about him, whether from the look of rough health, or the open glance of one who is conscious that he has never worked any wrong to a fellow-creature. His face was like Katie's, as the old hoary oak resembles an oakling. Katie's face was soft and *enticing*, his was rugged with lines of care, and furrowed by his long life-struggle. From the look of the hard jaw and occasional cold glitter of the eyes, one could guess that he possessed an indomitable will and a dogged resolution. Perhaps also he could hate boldly and fiercely.

For some days past he had noticed Katie's abstraction of manner. She had seemed to shun him, and always to be away, walking in the pine wood. She would leave him abruptly

at the entrance to the quarry, and often brought his dinner no further, but left it with another workman to deliver to him. Then a chum joked about Katie's new lover one day when they were all eating their dinner. And John Wright had been unable to get from the fellow the meaning of the joke.

Now, as he was walking along he remembered seeing a man stretched lazily on the heather under the trees, to whom he had bidden good day. Somehow he coupled that with Katie's ear-rings, and instantly his anger rose fierce and menacing. The old fellow was wonderfully strong, and few gallants single-handed could have held their own against him.

So the first place he went to in the wood was to that where he had seen my gentleman a-lying. He searched diligently, and in a few minutes found a little card-board box. Then on the footpath he trod on something hard, stooped, and saw that it was the ear-ring matching the one Katie was wearing. He stood a moment looking at it, and ground his teeth together in sullen rage—then walked straight home with the ear-ring in his pocket.

The next morning he asked Katie to show him where she found the ear-ring, and as they walked through the wood she led him past the spot and pointed to another, as the right place. But as she came back John Wright followed her, saw her stop and search eagerly in *the very place* where he had lighted upon the ear-ring the night before. Then as she went away, frightened as he could see, at not finding it, he stepped out on to the foot-path and watched her receding form.

‘God help her,’ he cried, ‘I knew she was lying!’

Ah! but Katie was only a labourer’s daughter! and her slight amount of education had only taught her to feel dissatisfied with her lot in life. She seized eagerly a chance of escaping from it. Its sordid squalor revolted her. The routine of work had become irksome in the extreme, since she had listened to Tom Darrell’s lying words.

Only a labourer’s daughter! How much in the sight of God! How little in the estimation of man! A something with less of strength of mind or purity of heart than her

better educated sisters of the great world. And with this, living a life where every temptation that could tend to lead a young girl astray was most powerful and seducing.

Katie was one of those warm-blooded creatures, whose animal passions are greater than their power of mind, yet still somewhat controlled by a certain half nicety of feeling that would keep them from yielding to common rough temptation, or coarse advances, but would leave them to fall before a clever man's sophistry in a very short time. And when these passions are expressed in a pretty face, mantling with warm gipsy blood, rendered doubly attractive by a certain combined innocence and consciousness of evil—ah! then, God help the possessor of these attractions, for man's lust knows neither pity nor restraint.

Perhaps thinking some such thoughts as these as he watched her leaving the wood, John Wright stood for a moment after his exclamation and then ground his heel savagely into the soft earth, while a horrible gleam of hatred shot from his dusky eyes. He determined to

watch his daughter, and to endeavour to meet her with her lover, for that she had one he felt quite sure. And he had vowed to show no mercy to the man who attempted to debauch his little Kate.

Fortunately perhaps for Tom he did not meet Katie that day. He was away at a picnic with his friends, and on his return, found a letter awaiting him from Mr Allerton, intimating that as his leave was two days over-past, he would like him to return at once. Tom swore when he read the letter, but as he could not afford to throw over Mr Allerton, he had no alternative but to obey. So early in the morning of the next day, about five o'clock, he got up and betook himself to the wood. He knew Katie took her father his dinner early sometimes, so he determined to try his chance. He saw her pass with her father, and so stationed himself that he could not help seeing her as she returned. He had determined to try to persuade her to go to London with him. Katie looked very neat and fresh as she came back, and when he took her hand in his and kissed her lips, she felt

poor girl, as if she could give up everything in the world for those sweet caresses.

He made her sit down on the soft heather beside him, and took her hand.

‘Katie,’ he said, ‘I’m obliged to go away to London to-day. How can I live without you?’

‘Oh, no! Don’t go away from me, Tom!’ moaned Katie, ‘I love you so.’

‘I wish I had not to go,’ said Tom. ‘But I am absolutely obliged to do so! Would you like to go with me, Katie?’

‘Oh, yes!’ she eagerly cried, then stopped and trembled and blushed. ‘Oh, Tom, I don’t think I ought—I dare not go away!’

‘Why not?’ cried Tom, and poured into her willing ears his earnest words of love.

## CHAPTER XIV.

YIELDING TO TEMPTATION—A SUDDEN INTERRUPTION—A  
HORRIBLE BLOW—JOHN WRIGHT IN THE FIR WOOD—  
THE AGONY OF A DAY—JOHN WRIGHT SEEKS LONDON—  
HE IS ACCUSED OF THE MURDER OF HIS DAUGHTER.

SO some minutes passed. Katie had ceased to tremble, she was nestling close to her lover, her glowing face upturned to his, her eyes swimming in the mad intoxication of her excited passions. She was pure yet! Tom had never more than kissed and fondled her! She was not yet his, body and soul. She had not become the broken toy, no longer valued and cast aside. She loved Tom madly, but also in her way purely and disinterestedly. She was one of those creatures who hazard everything for those they love. She would cheerfully have given her own life to save Tom's. Her ears drank greedily every loving word he uttered, and when he kissed her, her lips clung to his with frantic eager-

ness. Passion would soon have overcome her last and purest scruples. She would have gone with him if Tom had promised unequivocally always to love her. But suddenly her quick ear caught a sound of twigs and leaves crushed underfoot by some one coming. She sprang to her feet, just in time to meet her father, who, with his face distorted by passion, a thick bludgeon in his hand, rushed towards them. Kate stood boldly before him.

‘Oh, Tom! Go away,’ she shrieked. ‘Take care,’ and she threw herself upon her father, winding her arms round his, and clinging with her legs to him, so that he could not advance.

‘Damn you, wench,’ he cried, ‘let me go! Let me smash the man!’ and shook her, and tore, and struck her defenceless face and body, but could not make her quit her hold, and her cry still rang out—

‘Oh, Tom! take care; go away quickly.’

For a moment Tom stopped, irresolute. But again she cried, ‘Go away!’ and this time he obeyed, and ran swiftly into the wood. Once he was out of sight and hearing Kate

felt that he was safe, and she relaxed her hold of her father. As she did so, he struck her a horrible blow on the head that felled her to the earth. He sprang over her prostrate body and rushed towards the path Tom Darrell had taken, howling inarticulate cries of mad rage.

Meanwhile Tom, having reached the house of his friend, seized his portmanteau, bade them all a hurried good-bye, and, jumping into the pony-trap placed at his disposal, was driven rapidly to the station.

He caught his train, and was soon speeding up to Town. As he went he could not help thinking of what he had escaped; the man's furious face haunted him, and he still seemed to hear the dull sounds of the blows as they fell on poor Katie's face and bosom. Yet he felt no regret that she should have been thus brutally treated on his account; he rather congratulated himself upon his wonderful power over her, for such devotion to be shown for him after so short an acquaintance. And he inwardly determined some day, very soon, to return to Shirley, meet Katie, and take her away with him. What to? Did he ever

ask himself that question? I am afraid not! Certainly his subsequent conduct gave no clue to his ever having done so; or, if he had, he probably thrust the suggestion aside. And here arises a doubt as to whether Tom Darrell was absolutely vicious by nature or through false and specious reasoning.

The Almighty has implanted in man certain instincts; in the savage state they are purely animal and unreasoning; it is only as man becomes less brutal and makes a greater use of his reasoning faculties that these animal and sensuous instincts become refined and partake gradually of that indefinable something called a spiritual nature. In this state man keeps his feelings subject to a certain degree of control, under such restrictions as the social life, of which he is a unit, imposes upon him.

Now in a vicious or ill-regulated mind these passions gradually usurp a higher degree of power than socially should belong to them, and as society, in our civilized communities, refuses to provide an easy vent for these passions, they acquire a different and more dangerous bent. They seek gratification, and

by base subterfuge and duplicity attain their end at the expense of the whole community. Those who descend to these infamies have no want of argument to excuse, if not to justify, their actions.

Such a case was this of Tom Darrell and Katie. Probably Tom thought of nothing but gratifying his own passions, without even giving a single thought to the ruin he would work in the poor girl. 'Why should I desist from my amusement,' he would say, 'simply because you choose to condemn it as immoral? What does it matter whether I make pseudo-love to this girl, or leave it to be done by some one else? She is easily flattered, easily persuaded, and may be easily deceived. Why then should I pause? She is certain to be gulled by some one, therefore why should it not be I as well as any other man? Besides, it's all very well for you to prate about morality and divine laws and all that sort of thing; how do you know that what you say is the truth? Why even in the very book you appeal to for your Divine code of Law, there are plenty of examples to exonerate me. They

hadn't any of your parsons in those early days before the Deluge, and they didn't go to church to be married, as they hadn't yet been invented. I "go in" (expressive phrase) for natural love, and don't care a fig for your divine law and morality. I choose to amuse myself this way, and I don't see how you can persuade me it's not the right thing to do. Bother your damned humbugging morality and stuff—it is enough to make a man sick of life.'

How can this species of reasoner be convinced that what he does is wrong? How prove to him that he has no *right* to do it, even if it is not wrong?

Divine Law and the maxims of the Old Testament have no application, save in a restricted manner, to these offences. Nay, a man like Tom Darrell will quote even the New Testament, and distort the sense of Christ's own words to the adulterous woman—'Go thou and sin no more!'

—and make the Saviour's clemency a cloak to his offences. He would argue that no more now than then has any one a right to cast the first stone!

Besides that, he would decline to treat his pleasure as a sin.

Our laws, divine or human, do not strike properly at the root of this evil; for the one declare it shall be punished as a sin—and we have shown that Tom Darrell would not acknowledge it to be such; the other award no punishment at all, only imposing a fine upon the offender; easily and often is the payment of the fine evaded. Besides, to add to the ludicrous effect of the law, a fine is imposed only when the seduced actually gives birth to a child.

The law should take a strictly *modern* and human view of this subject. In our present state of society, from the mutual dependence of each individual of the community on his fellows, this immorality is more than immorality, it is more than sin—it is a *crime*. Let it then be punished as such; let some enactment be made that shall properly enforce a regulation that whosoever seduce a girl by false pretences of honourable love or hinted promise of marriage, shall be compelled to marry her, and support her, or in case of refusal or desertion

after such marriage, be punished and imprisoned as a felon !

Tom Darrell rode back to Town, thinking, as we have already said, of nothing but his own fortunate escape, and making resolves and meditating a plan whereby he might return to Shirley, and persuade Katie to go away with him.

Meanwhile poor Kate lay insensible in the wood, whilst her father rushed madly about, vainly seeking him, whom he considered his daughter's seducer. The poor wretch was torn and scratched by the brambles as he dashed through them, and his hands and face were covered with blood ; but his frantic search led to nothing, and at last even his maddened brain could but recognize the futility of further seeking. He fell, rather than sat, on the grass, and just as he did after he had seen his daughter searching for the ear-ring, moaned and rocked himself in silent agony.

Men passing through the wood, going to or returning from their work, saw him and wondered, thinking him mad. Nobody ven-

ture to go near him ; he looked so savage, so desperate, so wild in his torn clothes and with his bloody face and hands.

So the day passed on ; the sun climbing up the heavens and shining for a while straight and fiercely upon his uncovered head. He did not stir from the spot, only moaned and moaned, and rocked himself to and fro in utter abandonment and misery. His girl ! Bonnie Kate ! So gay, so kind, so fond of him ! So light stepping and tender touching, —for who had nursed him when famine fever had struck him down ? Why ! Bonnie Kate ! And that she should come to be a gentleman's plaything ! A toy ! Soon broken, and cast aside ! Soon to become vile ! Then viler ! and to fall ruined body and soul !

This poor man knew nothing of religion as we teach it. He had seen and heard a parson speak. He had even, as a child, been taken to church. But he could not appreciate the refining and purifying influence of Christianity, for the simple reason that he did not understand anything of it ! But his rough hard sense before, and now his terrible sorrow,

told him there must be some One higher and greater than he, some One greater than all; and there struggled up through his agony, mingling with his fierce hate, and deadly longing for vengeance, a confused, unuttered prayer, that Kate might be protected; by Whom, or by what Power, his dim knowledge could not have explained.

Suddenly he stopped his moaning and rocking and stood up, slowly, like an old man. The blood on his face gave him a horrible appearance, and the lurid gleaming of the eyes added to it. He paused a moment, leaning on his stick as if for support, then walked briskly away,—away to where he had left Kate, struck down by his hand.

Darkness was stealing over the wood, and the trunks of the fir-trees began to become blurred and indistinct, merging, as it were, their individual existence into that of all the wood. Their dreary, dark green leaves had a weirdly funereal appearance, and Wright fancied several times he could see Kate standing among them. It was only a mist, rising and wrapping round some fir-tree.

A wonderful stillness reigned over all, seeming the greater from the occasional sudden twitter of a bird and the crashing of the dried twigs under his foot. It oppressed him slowly and more powerfully as he approached the spot. The silence struck a cold feeling to him and a dull vague horror crept all over him. He looked at the blood on his hands and shuddered, for the thought came instantly, Is this Kate's blood?

He hurried a moment, then stopped, walked again a few paces, and suddenly seemed to break down with fear. Yet it appeared more as if he were fleeing from than going towards anything he feared, for he ran forwards and onwards, leaping and tearing over and through the bushes and brambles in his way. He thought he could escape the silence of the wood by this noise and crash.

He soon reached the place, and at one bound sprang through the bush that had concealed him when he had watched Kate and Tom. All was quiet and deserted. He looked round,—nothing was to be seen! Only a rotting piece of a tree that had lain there for

months. He fell on his knees and groped along the ground, feeling all over the grass and heather with his torn hands, and every moment became more restless—he found nothing! He searched the surrounding thicket—he found nothing! Then a fearful cry rang through the fir-tree wood; oh, how full of agony! how pregnant with hatred! and yet how full of love! the cry was simply this:—

‘Katie! Katie!’

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He had searched, but Katie had gone from the place. Where? God only knew. He did not stop a minute after he had uttered that terrible cry, but rushed away, pressing his hands to his ears, for his own words rang in them and sounded like Kate’s voice. He fell once, but got up again and ran on.

When he reached his poor cottage, he dashed open the door, and his wife shrieked at the sight of his blood-covered face and torn clothes, and when she saw his bloody hands and the mad look in his eyes, she flew at him and held him in her trembling grasp as she asked,

‘What have you done, Jack? Where is Kate?’

He returned no answer, but swayed to and fro as if about to fall.

She thought he was drunk, and shook him, and cried again,

‘Where is Kate?’

‘Damn her! She’s gone away from us!’ answered John Wright.

His wife let go of him, and he fell prone to the floor as if he were dead. She felt ready to swoon, poor wretch, but seeing her husband fall, rallied herself and came to him; calling him, he did not answer, she shook him and struck him, he did not move, though his eyes were wide open. His face was like death, and a froth showed at his lips.

Frightened and unable to lift him, though she tried, poor Mrs Wright sought assistance from a neighbour.

Together they carried her husband up the stairs and laid him on his bed; not daring to undress him or touch him, they sat and waited. Presently his eyes closed, and the neighbour, tired of waiting, declared it was a good sign,

and went away. Mrs Wright stayed a little while longer, then went down-stairs, and having occasion to say something to the neighbour who had helped her, just stepped in to say it. She only stayed for about ten minutes, and returning to her own dwelling, walked up-stairs to see how John was ! There was no one in the bed, no one in the room, and the window was open.

Some water in the wash-hand basin was dirty and bloody, his box was open, and his torn work-day clothes pitched into a corner ; all his other clothes were gone. Mrs Wright screamed and ran down-stairs and into the garden. Under the window of the bed-room the plants were trampled and crushed, and deep foot-marks were stamped in the soft earth.

The neighbours came in. Mrs Wright told them how her husband had returned, with dirty, bloody hands and face and torn clothes ; she showed them the clothes, there were marks on them ; he had left his knotted cudgel in the room, that too was stained with blood. She told them Kate had not been home since the morning, when she went out

with her father. Some one joined the excited throng, who had seen John Wright moaning and rocking himself in the wood. Another man spoke to having seen Kate with a foreign-looking gentleman in the wood that very morning. The mother grew frantic at the ideas that crowded her poor brain. The horrible thought came that perhaps her husband had killed her child, her only one, left out of many. The hints and suggestions of her neighbours excited her, and half crazed with anxiety and fear, she begged some one to take her to the nearest magistrate, in order to give her deposition and suspicions of her husband. At that moment her maternal love outweighed that she bore to him.

Several neighbours—the man who had seen John Wright in the wood, and he who had noticed Kate with Tom Darrell—went with Mrs Wright to the magistrate's, taking with them the blood-stained cudgel.

The magistrate heard their story, and the notion seemed so feasible to him that John Wright, in a sudden access of rage, had killed his daughter, on account of her connection

with the foreign-looking gentleman, that he issued a warrant for his apprehension. This was at about half-past nine o'clock in the evening, and by the next morning at nine the information was spread over half the country, and a reward offered for the apprehension of John Wright.

The description of his person was as follows :—‘ Medium height, square build, a slight stoop in the back ; hair iron-gray, eyes dark, close-cut whiskers ; face harsh and rough ; clothes common—corduroy trousers, iron-shod boots. Has the appearance of a miner.’

This was the description that was soon pasted on the boards outside police stations. But it was wrong ; for poor Mrs Wright in her confusion and sorrow had forgotten to tell the magistrate about the old clothes her husband had discarded when he went away. She described him as she had last seen him.

But John Wright in a strange fit of thought had dressed himself in his Sunday suit, the clothes he had been married in so many years ago, and which he had worn but seldom since that day : it was a suit of dark-brown stuff,

and his boots even were less thick than those he had thrown off. His appearance was so much altered, that any one who had met him walking along the London Road that night, and early the next morning, would have thought him a rough-looking farmer. He had resolved to seek out Kate and her seducer, and to take summary vengeance on the man who had done her so deep a wrong. And to do this, he had felt a desire to go out at his best, and so, perhaps, to escape notice more easily ; this was why he had donned his old wedding-suit.

The little cloud of coming storm had thus begun to form. It was very small as yet, but the hand of God was directing it, and no man could tell when or on whom the storm would burst. Perhaps those who had done the least wrong would have to pay the penalty, for knowing those who had committed it.

So John Wright trudged on to London, and as he set foot on its pavement, the first link of the chain that may one day shackle Tom Darrell was cast and forged.

## CHAPTER XV.

MEETS KATIE WRIGHT IN LONDON—'HELP ME! FOR THE LOVE OF GOD'—MRS SEIGERT SENDS FOR THE DOCTOR—PHILIP LISTENS TO KATIE'S DELIRIOUS RAVINGS—WHO IS MR TOM?—A PROBLEM WORTH THE SOLVING—PHILIP QUESTIONS KATIE AND MAKES A DISCOVERY—THE HELPING HAND.

A BLAZE of gas-light and the hustling of an eager hurrying crowd are around a poor young girl, who weary, foot-sore, half crazed with pain, and thirst, and hunger, had fallen prone on the hard pavement of the street.

Her dress and boots, thick with the gray dust of the country roads, and stained and soiled with London mud; her face pinched, and her eyes eager and bright.

As she fell, so she lay for a moment unnoticed; then a common fellow stopped, looked at her, and stooped by her side. Soon another and another were added one by one

to a group, eager and excited, that quickly gathered round her. She stared at them with unmeaning eyes, but did not offer to move. A woman bent down, saying, 'She's faint, poor thing,' and went to undo her dress to give her air, and greater ease in breathing.

As the strange hands touched her, the girl seemed to recover her consciousness, and made an effort to rise. The woman loosened her dress, and from a shop close by they brought her some cold water. She drank greedily, and suddenly got up, and with words of muttered thanks walked quickly away.

She tottered and almost fell once or twice, but after leaning against a wall for a few minutes, rallied and walked on again. Whither? She knew not! But only walked on. She had asked some man in the Old Kent Road where she was; he had told her she was in the Borough; and when she had asked again where the Borough was, he laughed, as at a good joke, when he told her it was in London.

That was all she wanted to know. To be in London was the object of her walking. So

she walked on, over London Bridge, on up Cheapside and Holborn, purposeless, and dazed and deafened by the roar of the traffic, and the pushing she received in the crowd.

Now and then she pressed her hand to her head and moaned, as if from pain, then walked on again in the same dreary way. As night came on, however, she began to feel frightened, and going into a baker's shop in Holborn, sat down, still in the same purposeless, dreary manner. The man came out to her from his little back parlour, and noticing her rough, dusty clothes, asked quickly—

‘What do you want, ma’am?’

The girl looked at him for a moment without speaking. He repeated his question, adding, ‘If you don’t want to buy any of my bread, you’d better be off.’

‘Bread,’ repeated she; ‘yes, I want some bread—give me some,’ and she turned to him with an appealing gesture.

‘Give you some! Well, that is good!’ cried the baker. ‘We can’t afford to give bread away; if you want any you must pay for it.’

The baker's wife at this moment came out to see what was the affair in the shop. With a woman's instinct she saw that the poor girl was wearied, and the pinched look in the face told a tale of hunger. She came round the counter to where Kate was sitting; and after looking at her for a minute, something told her that she was honest, if she did look so worn out and hungry.

'Haven't you any money, my dear?' said the baker's wife. The voice was kind and gentle, and the accent even kinder than the voice.

'Oh, yes!' replied the girl, and dragged from the bosom of her dress a handkerchief with some money tied up in a corner. Then she stood up, looked wildly round, and throwing up her arms, cried—

'Oh, help me, for the love of God!'

She would have fallen had not the woman caught her in her arms.

'Poor thing!' she said.

The girl looked up to her, and clasped her arms round her neck.

The confiding action touched the good woman's heart.

‘Joe!’ she called to her husband, ‘we must see what we can do for the poor soul.’

‘Humph!’ replied Joe, ‘that’s all very well; but who is she?’

Without answering, his wife carried the poor girl into their little sitting-room and laid her on the sofa; then bustled about and made a cup of tea, and cut some pieces of bread and butter.

All this time her husband looked sourly on. ‘What’s your name, young woman?’ he asked suddenly.

The girl heard and answered, ‘Katie Wright.’

‘Oh,’ said the baker, ‘I hope it is really your name.’

Here his wife came with the tea. Katie tried to eat and drink, but could only swallow half the tea—she could not eat anything. She moaned, and kept her hand pressed to her head; but presently from sheer fatigue she dozed into a restless kind of sleep.

‘Look here, wife,’ said the baker, ‘what d’you mean to do with this young woman?’

‘Poor wretch! I hardly know Joe, what

to do with her. We oughtn't to turn her out into the streets at this time of night. And I like her face.'

For a minute no more was said ; then the wife began again—

' Joe ! don't you think she's like Minnie ? '

The baker answered nothing, but looked at the sleeping girl. True he could see a likeness to Minnie, true, kind-hearted Minnie, and the child he had always most loved. And notwithstanding his sour looks, the old baker had a kind heart ; and as he gazed at Kate sleeping so restlessly, he felt that it would be cruel to tell her to go away again when she woke up. So he nodded gravely in answer to his wife's question, and in that nod Mrs Seigert saw acquiescence with her wishes.

They were a foolish old couple, this baker and his wife, and deserved to be robbed and deceived for such stupid kindness shown to a stranger. No doubt, had they passed along the road where the wounded man lay, they would have taken the part of the Good Samaritan as one belonging naturally to them, and would have poured oil and balm into the wounds as

if they had been born into this world for that special purpose. No wonder they only just managed to work along and live but little beyond the debt-line of existence. Who can profess to be astonished to hear this account of their affairs?

Man will deride your warm, tender hearts, and show a lofty contempt for you, Mr Seigert and Mrs Seigert. Perhaps it will be said such as you do not exist in London. But God is wiser than man, and knows how many people there are like you, doing good, purely and simply from warm-heartedness! So Kate tossed and moaned on the little scrubby sofa, and the shop was shut up for the night, and the roar of London subsided into a dull, continuous throbbing hum.

They made up a little bed for her in a room adjoining their own, and together carried her up to it, and Mrs Seigert undressed her, and giving her one of her own night-dresses, put her comfortably and quietly to sleep. She told her husband that she was certain the girl was honest, for she was *so* clean.

In the night they were awakened by a

loud shriek. Mrs Seigert jumped from her bed, lit the gas, and went into the little room where Kate had been sleeping.

She was standing in the middle of the floor, calling out, with her arms raised, 'Oh ! Tom, go away ! Go away quickly.' She struggled, and clasped her hands and arms together as if she held some one in their grasp.

Mrs Seigert tried to persuade her to get into bed again ; but she refused, and screamed when she was touched. Then she suddenly fell to the floor, and remained there stretched as if lifeless.

'Joe ! Joe !' cried Mrs Seigert, 'we must send for a doctor !'

Joe tumbled up and thrust on his clothes. 'Where shall I go to ?' said he.

'Go to our own doctor ! Go to Doctor Renhard's, and bring him or his son or some one back with you, quick ! I am afraid the poor girl is mad from grief or hunger.'

Her husband ran off, and meanwhile Mrs Seigert lifted Katie and put her into bed again.

When Joe got to Doctor Renhard's, he gave a vigorous pull at the night-bell, and soon brought Philip Darrell down in his old dressing-gown.

‘What’s the matter?’

‘I want Doctor Renhard!’ said Joe.

‘The Doctor’s out,’ said Philip.

‘Then Mr Vaughan must come,’ said Joe.

‘Mr Vaughan’s out,’ replied Philip.

‘Then you must come, sir. There’s a young woman in a faint at our house, and the missus don’t know what to do.’

‘All right!’ said Philip. ‘Can you wait a few minutes?’

‘Yes.’

‘Very well; I won’t keep you long,’ and ran up-stairs. He soon came down ready dressed, and taking his ‘case’ and a calomel powder for emergencies in his pocket, walked quickly towards Holborn with Mr Seigert, who detailed the case to him on the way.

‘Some relation of yours?’ asked Philip, when Mr Seigert had given him the details of the girl’s illness.

‘No, sir.’

‘Ah! your wife’s, perhaps?’

‘No, sir! she’s no relation of ours that I know.’

‘A friend, then? or an acquaintance? What, neither?’ cried Philip. ‘Who the devil is the girl?’

‘I don’t know in the least!’ answered Mr Seigert.

‘Do you know her name, even?’ said Philip.

‘Oh! yes, I know that! At least she told me it was Katie Wright.’

‘Oh! well! That’s something. But don’t you really know anything more about the girl—where she comes from, or where she is going?’ continued Philip.

‘We know only her name,’ said Mr Seigert. ‘And yet I am mistaken, we do know more than that—we know that the poor girl is hungry, homeless, and ill!’

‘And, I suppose, with those recommendations to consideration, you have actually taken a strange girl into your house and have given her food and shelter. Why didn’t you tell her to go to the workhouse?’

Mr Seigert looked full at his companion for a moment, then said—

‘Would you like to be sent to the work-house, sir?’

‘By Jove, no!’ cried Philip.

‘No, more would I, sir,’ continued the man. ‘Then why should I force a poor creature like this girl to go there and be degraded, when a little kindness and help may keep her from it?’

Philip said nothing further, but grasped the honest baker by the hand, and in that way expressed his concurrence in, and admiration for, what he said.

By this time they had reached the shop, and had no sooner entered than they heard the cries and moans of the unhappy girl.

Philip threw down his hat and umbrella, and followed Mr Seigert up the narrow, uncarpeted stairs.

‘This is the room, sir,’ said he, pushing a door open.

Philip went in, closing the door behind him, and at a glance understood the danger in which Katie Wright lay. Lay! No! Rather

tossed, and moaned, and got rigid, and then fell half lifeless into a shapeless bundle of humanity; then tossed and moaned again. He drew near the bed—Mrs Seigert gave him a chair, and he sat down. He took the girl's hand and pressed his fingers on the pulse; it was rapid and hard, and the skin of the hand and arm was hot and dry. She had been vomiting, too.

'Poor soul,' said Philip. He asked Mrs Seigert whether she had noticed any bruise or marks of violence upon the girl when she undressed her.

'No, sir! I can't say I did,' she replied; 'but I noticed how she held her hand to her head all the time as if it hurt her very much.'

'Ah! which side of the head?' asked Philip.

Mrs Seigert showed him the left side, and Philip passed his hand carefully all over. Towards the back of the head he could distinctly feel a swelling, large and somewhat hard.

'Can you oblige me with a light, ma'am.'

Mrs Seigert fetched a candle, lit it at the gas, and by Philip's directions held it so that its light fell full on the head. Philip parted the hair from the bump, and thus easily saw the colour and size. It was nearly black, and about an inch and a half in diameter; evidently the result of a blow, for it would hardly be possible to fall in such a manner as to produce such a contusion.

As Philip's hand left her head, Katie started up, and threw her arms about wildly, and attempted to leap from the bed.

Philip seized her arms and held her forcibly back.

'Oh, Tom! Mr Tom! Help me! Father, don't hit him. Oh, Tom, go away,' she cried, and struggled to set herself free.

'I've come to find you, Tom!' she moaned, and tears ran down her face.

Suddenly she opened her eyes and looked at Philip. She stared at him, and fell back on the bed, her eyes still fixed on his.

Philip met her gaze with a kind smile.

Katie muttered something inaudibly for-

a moment, then cried out, pointing to Philip, 'You have handsome brown eyes! They are like Tom's.'

Philip started up, the words were strange, and seemed pregnant with meaning.

'I think she is a little conscious,' said he to Mrs Seigert; then turning to Katie, took her hand in his, and said to her kindly,

'Do you think I am like him? Like Tom?'

Kate nodded in the affirmative.

'Poor child! Who is Mr Tom? Not your brother?' asked Philip.

'No! not my brother,' said Katie. Then her eyes closed, and for a few minutes she dozed.

'What is the matter with her, sir?' asked Mrs Seigert.

'She has brain fever!' said Philip. 'She appears to have been struck a violent blow on the head, which has produced slight inflammation of the brain.'

'Will she die?' whispered Mrs Seigert.

'God only knows, ma'am,' replied Philip.

‘Certainly she is young, is strong, and seems to have been moderately well nourished, so with careful nursing she may recover.’

Here Katie interrupted him with a wild cry. ‘Tom ! Tom, go away ! Oh ! Father ! don’t strike him !’ She sprang up in bed, and clasped her arms, and seemed to push and strive to prevent some one from moving. Then she suddenly relaxed her hands and fell to the bed muttering—

‘Tom is safe !’

For a moment she ceased speaking, only writhed, and tossed, and twisted about on the bed. Philip stayed, strangely anxious to hear more about Mr Tom.

Again Katie moaned and spoke, and always the name ‘Tom’ or ‘Mr Tom’ was uppermost in her delirium.

‘Tom loves me,’ she would say. Once she said to Philip as he sat by her,

‘You do love me, very much, Tom. Don’t you?’

Then she would start up again in the bed and wrestle and struggle with the impalpable

air, crying always in piteous accents, 'Go away, Tom! Go away! quickly!'

Philip asked her another question or two, but without eliciting any rational answer. She only stared at him and muttered something about Tom.

So he asked Mr Seigert to go back with him to the surgery for some medicine.

When he had made it, he gave it to him and said as he shook hands with him at the door, 'You have done a noble action, Mr Seigert, in taking that poor girl in. Your kindness will probably save her life!' and Mr Seigert bounded down the steps with the agility and light-heartedness of a boy.

Good deeds and a kind heart will always keep man young.

The next morning Philip told Dr Renhard of his nocturnal visit, and begged, as a favour, to be allowed to continue on with the case.

As Philip was going up for examination in a short time, the Doctor readily acquiesced, especially as it was close by. 'For,' said he, 'it will be a good opportunity for you to study

this class of fever.' So after breakfast, and before the patients began to come in, Philip walked rapidly to Holborn. He found the shop in great confusion, and Mr Seigert and his wife with very blank faces.

'What's the matter?' cried Philip. 'Is the patient worse?'

'No! No! Thank God!' said Mr Seigert. 'She's better, I think! She has had a long sleep, and seems refreshed by it.'

'Well, then, what is the matter?' repeated Philip.

'Why,' said Mr Seigert, 'this poor creature so disquieted me that last night I forgot to make the bread, and hardly know where to turn to get the large quantity we want.'

'Come! That can be remedied,' said Philip. 'Your blank faces made me anxious for my patient! Can I go up?'

'Oh, yes!' cried Mrs Seigert, and went up with him.

Katie was lying quietly, and when Philip and Mrs Seigert entered, turned her eyes towards them.

‘Ah!’ cried Philip, ‘that’s right! I’m glad you take notice! How is the pulse this morning? Ninety-eight! Wonderful! I am astonished! I expected to find it nearer a hundred and twenty!’

‘Then she is better, sir?’ asked Mrs Seigert.

‘Decidedly!’ said Philip. ‘She is marvellously . . . .’

‘Do you know Mr Tom?’ asked Katie.

Philip started.

‘Good God!’ he cried, ‘why do you ask me?’

‘You are so much like him!’ said Katie.

‘Like him?’ repeated Philip. ‘Why, how am I like Mr Tom?’

‘I hardly know,’ she replied; ‘your eyes are brown, like his, and your voice is like his, and your smile is like his, only . . .’

‘Only what?’ said Philip.

Kate did not answer, but continued looking dreamily at him.

Philip took her hand in his, and held it a moment or two. She seemed pleased.

‘You hold my hand as Tom holds it,’ she said; ‘and your hand is soft like his.’

Philip was thoroughly puzzled. Who was this Mr Tom? Could it be his Tom, his brother? A suspicion began to arise in his mind as to its being so.

‘Should you recognize a portrait of Mr Tom?’ he asked.

‘Oh, yes; I’m sure you know him, now!’ cried Katie. ‘Tell me, where is he? He loves me so, but father wanted to kill him!’

She shuddered, and sank back again upon the bed, for she had raised herself on her elbow in her eagerness.

Philip took out his pencil, and on the back of an envelope drew a rough sketch of his brother’s face, taking care to represent well the moustaches and *Impériale* style of beard. This he showed to Kate.

Hardly had she looked at it, than with a joyful cry she snatched it and put it to her lips, crying:—

‘Tom! This is Tom!’

‘Poor girl! poor girl!’ said Philip.

When her wild joy had subsided a little, he asked her a few questions, and skilfully drew from her an account of her meetings

with Tom at Shirley, his present to her, the finding of the ear-ring, and the final terrible moment when her enraged father had struck her to the earth.

After that she remembered nothing, until she had found herself walking in a crowded thoroughfare. How she had come to London she could not remember. Even when closely questioned, she could not recollect anything distinctly after she had been struck by her father.

Philip left her, deeply impressed with what she had told him. He guessed that the girl must be still pure and unfallen, from the manner in which she spoke of Tom and of the whole affair. And Philip thanked God for throwing this chance of doing a good action in his way; for he had already resolved to endeavour to persuade Kate of the wickedness of the life Tom had almost made her agree to share with him, and hoped, as she was now likely to recover, he should soon be able to get her away somewhere in the country out of the reach of temptation. But, unfortunately for the speedy carrying out of this plan, he had

made a great mistake in fancying Kate so much better. It was only a short period of rest and mental power restored by the sleep she had obtained in the night.

Towards evening all the symptoms returned. Mrs Seigert came for him in hot haste, at tea-time, and when Philip saw Katie he felt at once that the case was a very grave one.

And so for days the poor girl tossed and moaned and fought against the air, calling on Mr Tom, and occasionally lying motionless and speechless for hours.

Philip was unremitting in his attendance, and sometimes wept to hear the poor soul call so lovingly, so tenderly for Tom. She seemed in her delirium only to think of him and her father, and her imploring voice would have melted the hardest heart to compassion. It was always, 'Tom! go away! Father will kill you,' or else loving tones and caressing words. 'Tom! Dear Tom, you love me very much, don't you?' and she constantly persisted in her saying that Philip was like Tom. Per-

haps this was the reason why she always was soothed by his presence, and would moan and ramble less when she felt his hand clasping hers.

So the days and nights flew by. Mrs Seigert was worn out with watching and want of rest. Philip sent for a nurse, and told her to look to him for payment. Jelly and broth, and puddings, light nothings suitable to an invalid, all were sent by his orders and at his expense.

He saw that he had a great wrong to battle with ; and from his relationship to the man who had caused all this misery, felt an added weight of responsibility mingled with his general duty to a fellow-creature.

Nineteen days had passed in this terrible manner. Poor Katie was worn to a shadow. All her colour had fled her cheeks and lips, her eyes were lustreless, and hardly betrayed the fact of their belonging to a live person.

On the twentieth day Philip found a great improvement in her condition. The

fever was gone, and she slept calmly and well through the entire night.

After this she continued to mend, and by a judicious course of tonics, wine, beef tea, and jelly, Katie was soon able to sit up in bed, propped up by pillows.

All this time Philip had never missed for a single day to visit her; in fact, he used to go occasionally two or three times a day, and, as Kate got stronger, he felt all the more the difficulty of the task he had set himself.

Adèle, too, was becoming impatient as all these weeks had elapsed since Philip's last visit to Maidstone. He wrote as usual loving, brave letters, and in one told her of poor Kate's illness and of his having volunteered to attend her and see her through it safely—if God so willed.

Adèle discerned so much tender compassion expressed for Katie in Philip's letter to her about the girl's illness, that sometimes she felt quite anxious and perhaps a little jealous. Consequently, she was very glad to find from the subsequent letters that Katie

would soon be quite well. Indeed Kate was now allowed to get up and sit half dressed and wrapped in a thick dressing-gown and shawls by the window, unseen herself, watching the passers-by.

So the days passed on, every day bringing fresh strength to her, and every day increasing Philip's difficulty.

Philip had met his brother once or twice since Kate's illness, but only speaking with him on general topics, Tom never suspected, as how should he, that Philip was in possession of one of his secrets.

## CHAPTER XVI.

KATIE'S CONVALESCENCE—JUDGMENT IS PASSED UPON MR SEIGERT AND HIS WIFE—MINNIE COMES TO SEE KATE—PHILIP MAKES THE 'PREMIER PAS QUI COUTE'—A HAGGARD FACE WATCHES THE WINDOW WHERE KATIE SITS—THE MAN MEETS TOM AND PHILIP, AND FOLLOWS THEM—ANOTHER LINK OF THE CHAIN IS FORGED.

KATIE'S youth and robust bringing-up were all on her side against the deadly illness that had attacked her, and which now left her so weak and prostrate; so they fought the battle, and youth came out of it, as it ought, with flying colours.

Very appropriately do I say 'with flying colours,' for Katie began to get back her freshness of complexion and brilliancy of lips and eyes.

She tried once to walk across the room, and terrified poor Mrs Seigert by falling flat

to the floor, and there remaining till she was assisted to rise. As her strength returned she became restless and watchful, always at the window, staring all day long at the faces that flitted past, not three yards below her.

Philip's visits were more pleasant to her each time that he came, and she used to talk over every little occurrence that marked them with a zest that somewhat astonished Mrs Seigert. And she timed Philip by the old Dutch clock, as to how long he stayed and how many hours elapsed between each visit. She would complain if Philip came one day at three o'clock and the next at half-past.

'I expected you at three o'clock,' she would say.

Once Philip asked her why she looked forward to his coming with so much eagerness.

He feared she was beginning to love him, so he told her that he only came to inquire after her illness, and not after her.

'I don't come to see Katie Wright,' he said; 'I come to watch the recovery of a patient from brain fever.'

She staggered him by answering when he spoke like this, that she liked to see him because he reminded her of Tom.

It was always Tom! Little by little Katie began to speak about Tom, and never otherwise than to praise and glorify him. And Philip, whose object at present was to seek to detach her from Tom, was obliged to sit by and listen. Gradually, however, he skilfully interposed objections to Tom, but with so little success that he desisted, and determined to wait till he thought Kate sufficiently strong to bear what he felt it would be his duty to say to her.

So things went on as usual. Kate ate her jelly and blanc-mange, and sipped her beef-tea and wine, never dreaming for a moment to whom she owed all this, and also, perhaps, her very life; and as she grew stronger and regained her old brightness of cheeks, and lips, and eyes, Philip began to understand how dangerous it was for so pretty and gay a creature to be left without protection to fight and withstand the many temptations that the world presents.

Meanwhile Philip had acquired a great friendship for Mrs Seigert and her husband. He was Alsatian by birth ; and Philip and he had many a talk over the domestic life of the people of the Vosges mountains.

The neighbours and acquaintances of the worthy couple had long since ceased to be astonished at any of their charitable eccentricities, but this last affair completely roused them to a proper sense of the enormity of the offences committed by them against all social order. 'It was wrong,' said one honest creature, who had many a time had a loaf from the shop without tendering any legal coin in exchange ; 'it was wrong to treat them tramps so. It on'y made 'em stuck-up, and think 'emselfes equal to other folk.'

'Ah, true,'ma'am, is what you say,' echoed a good kind mother of seven. 'It is wrong. And a street-girl of all people too.'

'Well, the proverb say, "fools and their money is soon parted,"' cried another, who looked as if he had never had any money to be parted from, and so couldn't be a fool.

'But you mark my words, them Seigerts 'll come to grief—see if they don't.' Where-upon he marched off to seek out some comrade foolish enough to be parted from the money requisite to pay for a pot of beer, which of course would be shared between them.

'Old Bill's right,' said the mother of seven. 'They will come to grief, as he says, if they don't take care. Why, I heard the other day that the miller had to go without his money.'

It is highly probable that this dear upright soul owed the Seigerts, at that very moment, ten or twenty shillings for bread.

'Young 'uns eats such a lot, mum,' she would go whining to the baker's; and Mrs Seigert hadn't the heart that teaches us to think with indifference of other folks wanting bread.

Altogether it was a settled opinion among the neighbours that the Seigerts were going 'to the bad', and few dissented from the dictum that declared it would serve them right if they did, for being such fools.

God help us, if our good deeds will never be otherwise judged ! Oh, poor meanness of humanity, that can scorn those deeds in the humble that it applauds to the echo in the great. Ye poor, reflect ! Ye have not the right to be charitable, since ye have not the means.

Leave it to my Lord the Marquis ! He can give away, through his agent, twenty pounds to this and twenty pounds to that admirably conducted charity ; and what difference will it make to him if he does subscribe £100 to a hospital ; he can afford it, for is not his income some £50,000 sterling a year ! Oh ! you poor miserable Seigerts of this world, what business have you to meddle with the Cardinal Virtues, excepting to have Faith in your superior's Charity, and a humble Hope that the golden stream may turn your way.

What ! You protest against this. You insist upon your right to be charitable, to believe, and to hope ! Very well, my good people, do so, but pray do not protest if you are ruined by such absurd extravagance.

\* \* \* \*

As Katie was getting well and strong, the Seigerts' daughter Minnie came on a holiday visit. She was at a milliner's in a country town, and much esteemed by her employers. She had heard from her mother about Katie, and so came prepared to imitate them in their kindness to her.

Minnie certainly had some likeness to Katie. Philip saw them together the day of Minnie's arrival, and it seemed so to him. She was taller than Katie, but had the same dark hair and eyes, only her complexion was paler, and sedentary occupation had stolen the colour from her cheeks. She was merry and affectionate, and had quaint ways of showing her love for people, which soon won upon poor Katie, and helped to make her cheerful too.

Once Kate tried to get up from her chair to fetch something off the mantelpiece. Minnie sprang up, bore down upon her with big opened eyes, and a comical frown on her face.

'How dare you, child! Sit down this

instant;’ and as Kate did not immediately obey the imperious mandate, Minnie quietly seized her and carried her in her arms back to the easy-chair.

‘Oh! you Bad One!’ she said, ‘what do you mean by it?’ and instantly fetched her what she wanted. And ever afterwards, during her stay, Minnie kept to the nickname she had given Kate in a moment of fun.

Was Kate’s tea-cup empty,—for occasionally they came up all of them and had tea in the ‘Convalescent Ward,’ as Minnie called the room—a voice would say—

‘Mother! the Bad One wants some tea.’

At other times she would shriek up the stairs, when she had to sit and mind shop in the afternoon, for Minnie did not care to be idle—

‘How are you, Bad One?’ and when Kate answered that she was well, Minnie would tell her she didn’t know what she was saying, and had better go to sleep till she found out. Minnie did good to Kate too by

the example she gave her of incessant good-temper and gaiety over work. Before Minnie left, Katie so loved her that she confided all her story to her, and described to her in glowing words and with heightened colour how Tom had told her of his love.

‘Ah!’ said Minnie, when she had finished. ‘What is his name?’

‘Tom! Or rather, Mr Tom! as I always called him,’ answered Kate.

‘But that’s only his Christian name, dear,’ said Minnie. ‘What’s his surname?’

‘I don’t know that he has any other name but Tom—Mr Tom,’ said Kate.

‘Nonsense, Bad One, he must have a surname. Do you know what he is, then?’

‘Oh, yes!’ cried Kate; ‘he is a gentleman.’

‘Ah! Is he?’ said Minnie, and said no more that time.

Another day, when Kate was talking about Tom’s love, Minnie suddenly interrupted her by asking, looking all the while straight into her eyes,

‘When are you going to be married?’

‘Married!’ repeated Kate, then was silent; and her face grew crimson red. Minnie still kept her eyes fixed upon her, and repeated the question—

‘When are you going to be married?’

‘I never thought about that,’ said Kate.

‘Didn’t Tom ever speak about it to you?’

‘No! He only asked me to go away from Shirley and stay with him,’ answered Kate.

‘Oh, poor Bad One,’ cried Minnie, ‘poor Bad One; how wicked of him, oh, how wicked!’ And she clung round Kate and kissed her, and wept over her, and cried at last—

‘How glad I am you fell ill! Else, poor child, what would have become of you?’

Kate wondering at this, Minnie poured into her ear the story of one of her companions at Bromley. She had been made love to by a ‘gentleman,’ and the end of it was that after a time the ‘gentleman’ went away, and the poor

thing had a baby, and now she was very miserable, and no one would be kind to her.

Spite of herself and of her great confidence in Tom, Kate shuddered as she listened—and when Minnie finished, by declaring that she wouldn't have anybody make love to her, who did not mean to marry her, Kate bent her head, covered her blushing face with her hands, and burst into tears.

Oh, Minnie, you are teaching her very bitter lessons, but very salutary ones!

'Don't cry so, dear Bad One,' said Minnie, 'I won't say another word against Tom.'

Kate's tears only fell the faster for this attempt at consolation, and from that day her mind, awakening as it were to the consciousness of the evil that had almost entangled her, became more elevated, and better able to judge the actions of those around her.

Philip did not fail to notice the growing change in her manner, for on his next visit she did not allow her hand to remain in his any longer than was necessary for him to feel her pulse. She did not mention Tom once, she

who had been so constantly talking of him to Philip ; and when her eyes met his, as he spoke and inquired after her health, she looked down, and Philip could watch the red blood mantling slowly in her face. All this surprised him, and to a certain extent alarmed him. She never used to betray any signs of embarrassment or blush when he had been before. Once the suspicion crossed his mind that the poor girl might, through gratitude, have taught herself to love him, but that suspicion soon faded. At last Philip felt that he could no longer delay the explanation he wished to make to Kate, for she was rapidly recovering, and would soon no more need his attendance. So one day he began, abruptly and awkwardly, in this fashion—

‘ My dear child ! ’

Kate looked up with a start and blushed, for the accent reminded her involuntarily of Tom’s voice.

Philip noticed the blush, and it embarrassed him. However he continued :

‘ I have long wished to speak to you about

what caused your illness. Did you receive a blow on the head, the day before, or the morning of, the day that you reached this shop ? ’

Involuntarily Kate murmured, ‘ Yes ! ’

‘ Ah ! I thought so ! ’ said Philip. ‘ Now, from your delirious raving, and by a careful examination of the head, I was already nearly certain that such was the case. And I know also, or I think I know, whom it was that struck you ! ’

Kate had risen from her chair as Philip spoke, and supporting herself on its arms, looked straight before her.

Philip paused. The girl’s look was frightful in the horror expressed in her countenance. Her eyes seemed glazed with some strange scene of terror, her mouth gaped, and a deadly pallor overspread her face.

‘ Good God ! ’ cried Philip. ‘ What makes you so ill ? ’

Kate did not answer, but turned and clutched his arm with so forcible a grip that Philip uttered a cry of pain. Then she fell back into her chair, and for a moment seemed

as if about to faint. Philip seized a smelling-bottle that was on the mantel-shelf, and after inhaling the fragrant, pungent vapour, Kate slowly recovered.

Her first look was at Philip, her first words to Philip, and yet perhaps to Tom as well.

‘Oh! You must know all, sir!’ Then stopped, but continued thus :

‘And you must be Tom’s brother, you are so much like him. Has he told you?’

‘No! He has told me nothing,’ replied Philip. ‘It is only from your delirium, and by your sudden recognition of the sketch I made of him, that I have drawn my conclusion. Poor child! to have been so duped. Oh! let me warn you to be ever henceforth on your guard, lest you should meet Tom and fall again under his dangerous fascination. If you did, you would be infallibly lost!’

‘Lost!’ echoed Kate. ‘Oh, no! I do not believe you! He loves me so much!’

‘Yes! loves you!’ cried Philip. ‘But loves you only to deceive you, and once tired of you he would desert you as unscrupulously

as he would take advantage of your love for him.'

He spoke again after a minute's pause, and boldly laid before Kate's eyes and mind the picture of a future, base, horrible, revolting, and loathsome, that might be hers if she disdained and refused to listen to his warning voice. But he was too eager in his desire to do her good, not to be passionate and harsh in the words he poured into her ear. He was so harsh and overbearing, crushing out the poor poetry of her love with so hard and relentless a heel, that Katie could not refrain from comparing Philip's cutting words and bitter eloquence with Tom's flute-like voice and honeyed flattery. She had known so little of the poetry of life, so little of the passion that breathes, and lives, and dies with love, that Philip's hard morality only made her cling and hug tenaciously to her heart the faint *souvenirs* and joys her short time of love had left her. So when Philip ceased she turned her cold face to him, and although burning

and trembling with eagerness, said calmly and coldly a few words of thanks.

Philip was astonished, and so astonished that he did not think to remark upon the sudden change in her manner towards him, but went away, after shaking hands.

As Philip closed the door Kate flew to the window and threw it wide open, so that the cool air might fan her cheek.

A man dressed like a labourer was just crossing the road as she opened the window. The click of the fastening shot back, made this man turn and look up to whence the sound came.

A deathly whiteness overspread his countenance as he saw the young girl, and his haggard look fastened itself upon the face at the window with a horrible fascination.

Kate did not see the man as he saw her, for her eyes were looking out, far away. She did not see the surging crowd of life moving before her, just below the window, she did not hear a sound of the traffic's roar. Her eyes

and ears, and soul had escaped from the narrow room, and she only saw Tom's eyes gazing lovingly into hers, and only heard his loving words that seemed chorused by the 'sough' of the waving pine-trees and the joyous songs of the birds.

And all the while this poor haggard face looked up and watched hers, greedily and angrily. For months John Wright had worked and watched and sought through London for some trace of his lost daughter or of her seducer. All his labour had been in vain. He was growing terrible and haggard from the wild contending passions that tore at his breast, and could not be let out, for he could not find the man who had raised this madness within him.

And now Chance seemed to do for him what his own perseverance and endeavour had been unable to accomplish. By the mere snap of a window-fastening he had found his daughter again! Was this Chance, or the inexorable march of Fate? Perhaps it was the hand of God that had led him there.

Oh, the wild tumult in that father's heart ! How terrible, how agonizing ! How horrible it would have appeared to the passers-by had they been able to read the drama that was being rehearsed within him. God only could read it. Even the poor wretch himself could not have analyzed his feelings.

Rage, at the thought that he should behold his child sullied and fallen, bearing, perhaps, the signs and consequence of her degradation. Terror, as he remembered that terrible day in the wood at Shirley, and the blow that had felled Kate to the ground. And love mingled with all this passion, for his child had been very dear to him and very loving. Shame added its weight of grief to these opposing passions, and beneath them the man had shrunk and withered, and grown haggard and terrible.

He longed to go up and take Kate in his arms, as he had when she was a child, but the thought that he might find her with her lover arrested his footsteps.

He had sworn to kill the man who had

debased his child ; for he firmly believed that Kate had yielded all to Tom ; and he felt it would be risking his revenge to attempt to carry it out before his child. The idea of having to strike her *again* caused him to shudder from head to foot.

So he resolved to lie in wait and watch. He applied for work at a large factory in Holborn, nearly opposite Seigert's shop, and set himself to notice every one who entered or left it.

Katie never saw the haggard look that was so often lifted to her window. She did not think of her father, save with a shudder of horror and fear, and certainly would never have dreamed for a moment that he could have found her.

For a time John Wright watched the window, but his intervals of freedom from work were so few that he felt his watching was useless since it was not continuous. So he left the factory and betook himself to night-work, and became a night-scavenger, that he might watch during the day.

One day as Philip was paying a final visit to Kate Wright he met his brother just as he was walking down New Oxford Street. As Tom had nothing to do that afternoon—it was on a Saturday, by the by—he volunteered to go with Philip.

So they walked down Holborn together, Philip warning his brother that he was going to see a patient.

‘Never mind!’ said Tom; ‘I’ll wait outside for you.’

When they got to Seigert’s Philip went in to see Kate. Tom lit a cigar and walked about just outside.

At this moment John Wright, who had seen Philip go in, and knew him as the ‘Doctor,’ and felt a species of love for him, turned his eyes from the door and caught sight of Tom walking up and down. A smothered cry burst from his lips, and his face was suffused with blood, and his eyes swam. He nearly fell, but supporting himself against the pillar of the lamp-post, rallied. He looked again across the road, thinking that as he

always had Tom present in his imagination, it might be a mistake. No! it was not a mistaken likeness! It really was the man in whose arms he had seen Katie that morning in the wood.

He crossed the road and came to where Tom was standing, that he might observe him the better.

There was no mistaking the cruel, handsome face, the long moustache, the Yankee beard, the well-formed nose, and the cold, hard brown eyes. John Wright gazed and gazed until a red mist rose between him and Tom, and shut him out from his sight. He felt at that moment a tigerish thirsting for blood, and his tongue rolled round his mouth, licking the thick and hot saliva that clung to the roof and the gums. But by a powerful effort he curbed the terrible passion, and his eyes saw clearly once more.

He saw the 'Doctor,' as he mentally called Philip, come out, and joining Tom link his arm in his. He noticed at the first glance the

family likeness between the two. He heard Tom ask Philip—

‘How is she?’ and Philip said,

‘Nearly well! She will soon be able to move about.’

To the father, who, listening with feverish eagerness, heard these words, this ‘she’ in the mouths of each of the speakers meant Kate, and a cold shudder ran through him.

Tom and Philip walked away. The man followed them, heard every word they said, every laugh, and saw every look, and distorted every one. Everything they said he referred to Kate. One word he heard Philip say almost in his brother’s ear was this:

‘Miscarriage,’ and a shiver, horrible and stupefying, chilled his very heart. He thought it referred to Kate!

It is impossible to convey an idea of the tortures this man suffered on the way from Holborn to — Square. The analysis of such terrible suffering would be too horrible. And all this was unmerited pain! John

Wright had been an honest man, doing his duty in his daily work cheerfully and manfully, and living his sordid and poor life without repining, for he was happy in his wife and daughter. But since the discovery he had made of Kate's ruin, as he supposed, the man had become changed. In fact, he was no longer a man ! He was a wild beast of prey, with reasoning faculties directed only to one end—how to be revenged on the man who had taken away his child.

When Tom and Philip bade each other good-bye at the door, John Wright was watching them ; but he did not follow Tom, he stayed, for he had conceived a plan that might help him forward at less cost of watching and time. He came over from the road and knocked at the Doctor's door. He was shown into the surgery and found Philip.

‘I want the Doctor !’ said Wright.

‘He is not in at present,’ answered Philip.  
‘Is it anything I can do for him ?’

‘I don't know about that,’ rejoined John Wright, ‘as I don't know you.’

‘I am the Doctor’s assistant,’ replied Philip with a smile.

‘Oh, I can see that, but it’s not what I mean,’ continued the man. ‘I don’t like to speak without knowing your name. I was told to ask for him, and I want to know whether your name’s the same, d’ye see?’

‘Well,’ said Philip, much amused, ‘I don’t know whom you mean by “him,” but my name is Philip Darrell.’

‘That’s the name, sir,’ cried John Wright, with well-feigned joy. ‘I’ll go back and tell my missus you’re in.’

With that he opened the surgery door, shut it again carefully after him, and walked up the hall with a sinister smile on his face. As the man-servant opened the door, he turned and said to him,

‘What a nice gentleman Mr Darrell is.’ The man-servant liked Philip, so acquiesced.

‘Is his brother John as kind as him?’ asked Wright.

‘He aint got a brother John,’ said the servant; ‘his brother’s name’s Tom.’

‘Oh, ah, I’d forgotten. It’s a long time since I saw him,’ said John Wright.

As he went down the steps, he said to himself—Tom Darrell—Tom Darrell—Tom Darrell—over and over again. And seemed to hug the name and cling to it. Oh, no, he would never forget it.

Philip told the family at dinner-time of the strange questions some old labourer had put to him in the afternoon, and made them laugh with his description. Little did Philip think that as John Wright went down the steps the third link in the chain was forged and clenched.

END OF VOL. I.





